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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY IN THE PROVISIONAL DISTRICT OF ALBERTA 1887 - 1905

by

Ⓒ GEORGE H.W. RICHARDSON

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY IN THE PROVISIONAL DISTRICT OF ALBERTA 1887 - 1905 submitted by George H.W. Richardson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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DATE July 5, 1976

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of the Conservative party in provisional district of Alberta in the pre-provincial period. Its focus is the sphere of federal politics and its organization is accordingly chronologically oriented to the five federal elections held during the period. The thesis begins with an introductory chapter examining the creation and political development of Alberta in the 1880's, and continues with chapters devoted to each election year and the intervening periods between them. It concludes with a short chapter describing the effects political developments in pre-provincial Alberta had upon the 1905 election.

It is the contention of this author that the course of politics in Alberta during this period was directly affected by regional and metropolitan struggles within the district. The Alberta Conservative party was above all a party of the southern ranching elite; its political strength and the man-power pool from which it drew its elites were both southern-based. Northern Alberta was poorly represented in the composition of Conservative organization, and on at least two occasions, northern candidates for the Conservative nomination were rejected by the party at least partly because they were from the north. This political bifurcation of the district worked for Conservatives only as long as southern ranchers formed the bulk of the district's population. After 1896 when the north began to edge closer to equalling the population of the south, and the

population composition of the south itself began to change to favor settlers over ranchers, the Conservative party, by virtue of its elitist exclusive nature, lost much of its previous power.

Within the party itself, constant power struggles were waged between southern Conservatives represented by Macleod and Lethbridge and the Calgary Conservative Association. These disputes seemed the product of metropolitan battles waged among the three towns. Calgary Conservatives like Senator James Lougheed and T.W. Jackson attempted to dominate the district party, and their actions and the resultant reactions of southern Conservatives were directly responsible for the rejection of the candidacy of Richard Hardisty in 1887 and the defeat of the Conservative candidate, T.B. Cochrane, in 1896.

Added to these troubles the Alberta Conservative party was continually bereft of a strong public leader. Senator Lougheed was not prepared to assume such a public role, and until the arrival of R.B. Bennett in 1897, no real leader of the party had emerged. Bennett himself was greatly hampered by his inability to appeal to the common man and by the publics' association of the Conservative party with the swiftly declining southern ranching elite. The only possible leader of the party was F.W.G. Haultain, the Territorial Premier, but although campaigning vigorously for the party at election times, he refused to stand for the federal House, preferring instead to lead a non-partisan Territorial Assembly.

By 1905, though partially successful in the 1904 election, the Alberta Conservative party was in disarray. Metropolitan and regional struggles and the decline of the influence of the ranching elite had all taken their toll, and the party's only hope of resurrection, F.W.G. Haultain, had opted to continue to lead the fight for non-partisan politics in the west.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis, both its merits and its faults, has been largely the product of the work of this author, I would however like to thank Dr. David J. Hall for his consistently well-informed, constructive supervision of the work. As well, the kind encouragement given me by Dr. John A. Eagle and Dr. Kenneth J. Munro should also be mentioned. Finally, I would like to thank the staff of the Glenbow Archives of Calgary for their assistance in this and other projects.

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INTRODUCTION

ALBERTA IN THE 1880's

The district of Alberta was little more than an administrative expedient conceived to make postal service more efficient. In May of 1882, the Macdonald government established three other districts along with Alberta "for the convenience of settlers and postal purposes. . .."[1] Besides Alberta, they were named Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Athabaska. Their sizes were roughly comparable to both those of the larger eastern provinces, and of their neighboring American states.[2]

By size and shape, Alberta was a somewhat reduced version of its present provincial dimensions. Its boundaries ran north from the 49th parallel along range 11 west of the 4th principal meridian to the 55th parallel, and thence west along the 55th parallel to the summit of the Rockies, and from the summit south to the 49th parallel. The area comprised 106,100 square miles, was 430 miles long at its greatest length, and was an average wideth of 250 miles.[3]

At the time of its creation, Alberta was thinly settled, with a population of probably no more than 7,000, including Indians and metis.[4] Its principal communities were Macleod, Calgary and Edmonton. In addition to these centres, there were several other smaller settlements and a number of police posts, but in 1881, neither Calgary, Edmonton, Macleod, nor the smaller settlements were much more than collections of ragged tents and frame houses. In both Calgary and Macleod, settlement revolved around, and to a great measure depended upon the Northwest Mounted Police posts which had been built following the arrival of the Force in 1874. Edmonton, in addition to its Police detachment, also had the Hudson's Bay Company post of Fort Edmonton.

Macleod, besides being the southern headquarters of the Force, was also a trading outpost of the Montana-based I.G. Baker Company, and the centre of the growing ranching industry in the southwest, but in the early 1880's the town was really little more than "a wide muddy lane with a row of dirty, half-finished shanties flanking each side."[5] It was initially situated on the lower banks of the Old Man River, 100 miles south of Calgary, but the site was subject to flooding in the spring. By 1883, much of the town had slipped into the river, and the townsite had to be relocated higher up the bank on firmer ground, and the Police fort rebuilt.[6]

The town experienced some prosperity with the growth of the ranching industry, but after 1883 it surrendered its role as ranching capital to Calgary which had usurped Macleod's position by virtue of being on the CPR mainline. Not linked to the all-important CPR until 1893, Macleod soon lost even its position as chief distribution point in the southwest to Lethbridge, which was blessed with a more diversified economic base and a rail link to the outside world.

Between Macleod and Calgary, settlement was largely grouped around the ranching industry. In 1883, the communities of Cochrane, Fish Creek and High River were the most important.[7]

Calgary, until 1883, was only on the "periphery of the ranching district," and was dependent for survival upon its twin roles as commercial link between the northern fur trade and US distributing centres to the south, and its position as Police divisional headquarters.[8] The town itself consisted of a "dozen log houses of which the most important was the I.G. Baker trading post," and the Police post.[9]

The railway changed all that. Its coming quickly placed the town in the position of being the major distributing point in the district and the headquarters of the ranching industry. Thus, an eyewitness to the arrival of the rail line reported

> a sudden spurt has taken place, ... Fifty to sixty tents and some frame houses have already sprung up.[10]

From 1884 to 1888, Calgary's population shot from 500 to 1800, but the town was not without growing pains. When the CPR decided to locate its station on the west bank of the Elbow, almost a mile from the existing settlement on the east bank, trouble resulted. Businessmen and speculators in the original townsite objected that they were effectively cut off from the CP station and the settlement which was bound to grow up around it. The resultant dispute between eastern Calgary businessmen and speculators like Wesley Orr, and those who had invested heavily in west Calgary lands like James Lougheed, simmered for years and frequently intruded into the course of civic, Territorial and federal politics.[11]

Despite this dispute, the town grew rapidly, and, by 1888, though erroneously placing Calgary's population at 3,000, G.H. Ham could report more accurately that the town was

> the distributing point for a great portion of the immense territory of Alberta and the mountain country to the west, freight for Edmonton and the North Saskatchewan country all passing through here.[12]

The country leading north from Calgary to Edmonton lay relatively vacant for much of the 1880's with the exception of isolated fur trade posts and small settlements like Red Deer which was established in 1884 at a ford in the Red Deer River by Reverend Leonard Gaetz.[13]

Edmonton was the most northerly town in the district and easily the oldest. Established first as a Hudson's Bay Company post in the late eighteenth century, by 1881, its population stood at 250 including natives.[14] During the early 1880's it was buoyed by the promise of the CPR building through Jasper Pass to the Pacific, and there was a great deal of settlement in and around the town. However, with the re-routing of the railway, the short-lived boom came to an abrupt end and "left Edmonton in the backwater of neglect as the tide of population moved southward."[15]

Before the coming of the railway to Calgary in 1883, and previous to the construction of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway joining the two cities in 1891, the prime mode of transportation in the district was the stagecoach and the bull train. These conveyances plied a network of trails which linked the three major communities in Alberta like beads on a string.

In the south, the Macleod Trail covered the 100 miles from Calgary to Macleod, and the trip between the two centres took two days. The Calgary and Edmonton Trail was not established until 1883 with the coming of the railway to Calgary. The stage journey was considerably longer than its southern counterpart, taking five days.[16]

Although the arrival of the railway spelled death for the Macleod Trail, it had the opposite effect upon the Edmonton and Calgary Trail. The Macleod route was effectively by-passed by the CPR line, but by the same token the railway allowed Calgary to supercede Winnipeg as the distribution point for Edmonton and the country to the north.[17]

The arrival of the CPR not only affected the future of several Alberta towns and changed the nature of the district's infra-structure. It was also directly related to the rise of Lethbridge, the fourth principal town in the district. Lethbridge had been founded in 1882 to exploit the coal deposits first discovered on the banks of the Old Man River by Nicholas Sheran.[18] This discovery soon caught the eye of Canadian entrepreneur Alexander Galt. He succeeded in convincing Canadian and British investors to back a colliery on the banks of the Old Man, and in 1882 the town was born. For three years, the colliery and the fledgling town languished until in 1885 Galt built a narrow-gauge railway from the town to the CPR line at Dunmore near Medicine Hat.[19] With the construction of the "Turkey Track," the prosperity of the town was assured. It soon became a distribution point for the whole southwest and was well established by the time its metropolitan rival, Macleod, was served by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway's southern extension in 1893.

The only other town of note in the southwest was Pincher Creek. It had grown up around the site of a government horse breeding and cattle station which had been established in 1879. The area was well suited to ranching, and attracted many ranchers and ex-servicemen.[20]

The district itself was split by divergent economic interests, geography and, in 1883, by the railway. The north was the domain of the fur trade and mixed agriculture. However, because of the lack of transportation facilities, little of this potential wealth, especially in agriculture, could be exploited during the 1880's.[21] By contrast, the south was an area almost ideally suited to ranching. Although initially serving the Police and the treaty Indians of the Blood and Blackfoot nations, the industry expanded greatly after 1883 when outside markets became available through completion of the railway.[22] This development assured the dominance of the south over the north for the remainder of the nineteenth century, and the sense of being left behind by western development did nothing to make relations between the north and south more amicable. As early as 1882 Frank Oliver of the Edmonton Bulletin was writing bitterly that:

> The people here rest their hopes on the country and on themselves, not on the railway and the government.[23]

The north and south were even further divided by simple geography. The Atlas of Western Canada, published in 1901, noted:

> Alberta comprises within its limits two divisions showing marked distinctions in typographical and climatic conditions. The southern is open rolling country devoid of timber except along the streams and in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains while the northern half is more or less timbered throughout. . . .[24]

If the north was the land of the future in the 1880's, the south enjoyed the substantial fruits of the present. The ranching industry received the patronage of the federal government, and following its first tentative steps in the late 1870's, the ranchers were given a great boost from the government in the form of a land leasing policy permitting the lease of up to 100,000 acres at nominal yearly rates. From 1881 to 1883 the era of large cattle ranches like the Cochrane, Northwest, Walrond and Oxley was inaugurated.[25]

The ranching community became both the economic and social elite of the district. The society growing up around the ranching industry was not simply a carbon copy of the American frontier, however. It was rather a reproduction of the "metropolitan culture of the east or of the unstratified social milieu of rural Britain."[26]

The ranchers were supported and reinforced by the Police. Officers in the Force were often from eastern Canada and the United Kingdom and had been drawn from families of "some means and education."[27] This similarity in social and educational backgrounds tended to draw the Police and the ranching community together. As well, many servicemen finishing their tour of duty stayed in the south and were integrated into the ranching industry.

The hegemony of the ranchers was challenged only by the small stream of settlers which, from the mid-1880's slipped into the fertile river and creek bottoms of the south. Their demands that the lease structure be either abolished or changed to allow for homesteading on the leases was fervent and vocal, but little heeded until the 1890's.[28] The ranching industry was simply too powerful to permit its control of the south to be seriously affected.

The only other major economic activity carried on in southern Alberta was coal mining. The Galt Company had opened their colliery in 1882, and because of the Company's diversification, had managed to survive the depression that saw many other western coal ventures die. The colliery and the CPR shops established in 1886 were the mainstays of the town's economy, and Lethbridge was very much a company town. But it appears the relationship between the town fathers and Company officials was amicable. It could scarcely have been otherwise, for the town was firmly hitched to the Galt star, and its fortunes rose and fell according to the success of the coal mines.[29]

Looking at both the ranching industry and the coal company, it quickly becomes apparent that both operated within the context of metropolitanism.[30] That is, the capital and management of both were controlled by eastern Canadian and British investors using the west as an investment hinterland. Southern Alberta, then was not so much the wild and wooly frontier counterpart of the American experience, but rather "a colony within a vast commercial empire, ..."[31]

This metropolitanism on a grand scale was reproduced in miniature in the south. The towns of Lethbridge, Macleod and Calgary all vied to create an economic hinterland of the surrounding area. That Calgary, through its CPR connections, assumed the status of district metropolitan centre, did not check the ambitions of Macleod or Lethbridge. They too had their hopes of becoming metropolitan powers by tapping a portion of the trade between major urban centres like Calgary and Regina.[32] Although status as a limited metropolitan centre was within the grasp of such towns as Lethbridge or Macleod, it did not hinder their aspirations to bigger and better things. Thus Lethbridge hoped to become "the most important industrial centre in western Canada,"[33] while Macleod had visions of being the Police and ranching capital of the Northwest.[34]

This metropolitan struggle was made even more intense by virtue of the fact that the resources worth competing for were extremely limited, and western towns were therefore

> fiercely competitive, harshly critical of each other's progress and very suspicious of any schemes adopted by their neighbors.[35]

As small an item as the location of a government post office or land registry was sufficient to set off a vicious metropolitan feud lasting years.[36]

These various metropolitan struggles directly affected the course of political activity in the district. Calgary naturally assumed the dominant political role, but not without opposition. Attempts by Calgary political organizers to affect the choice of political candidates were usually met with great opposition. This opposition was, at least in part, an extension of the metropolitan rivalries in the district.

Partisan politics did not become a part of Alberta's political scene until 1887 and Alberta's first federal election. Previous to that time there was a unity among Albertans which broke down only with the introduction of federal politics.

Actually, the nature of its status placed the west in a rather unenviable political position. It was dependent upon federal aid for growth, yet with the establishment of the machinery of government it was inevitable that opposition to certain aspects of the government's handling of the west would arise. If this opposition took on a partisan color, there was a real possibility that the government would react in a partisan fashion. This was especially true of federal representation, and thus:

> Dependent upon federal largesse yet suspicious of eastern dictation, the western attitude toward national politics was often a curious mixture of ministerialism and defiance.[37]

The creation of four provisional districts did not signal any real change in the political situation in the west however. From 1881 to 1887, the Territorial Council served as the representative body of local government, but it remained to the Lieutenant-Governor and the federal government to control much of the business of government.

This "colonial" relationship of the west vis-à-vis the federal government went back as far as the Act for the Temporary Government of Rupert's Land passed in 1869. At that time, the form of Territorial Government was set. It was based on the Lieutenant-Governor and an appointive Council. In 1877, this form was altered somewhat by the provision for elective councillors to a maximum of 21 at which time the Council would be abolished and an Assembly established in its place.[38]

Elected representation was first granted in March 1881, but it was not until 1883 that Alberta got its first elected member.[39] This was Frank Oliver. In 1884, Calgary was granted two seats on the Council, which were won by H.S. Cayley and J. Lauder.[40] A year and a half later, the ranching community and Macleod were finally given representation, and they sent British peer Lord Boyle to Regina. Boyle defeated Pincher Creek rancher G.C. Ives for the seat.[41]

Representation in the Territorial Council was not really a priority of southern Alberta. The ranching industry, of which Boyle was a member viewed the Council as a rather ineffective appendage of the federal government, and suspected it held sympathies more in line with settlement than ranching.[42] Furthermore, with its extensive eastern contacts, there was little the Territorial Council could do for the industry that could not be accomplished more quickly in Ottawa. The Galt Company as well had eastern connections which precluded much interest in the Council.

In fact, the Council was looked upon, from the beginning of the ascendency of elected members, as a sort of intermediate step in the granting of an Assembly. It is further evident that whatever their concept of the form Territorial government would take after 1887, all those urging the granting of a Territorial Assembly associated such a body with the cession of responsible government.[43]

Although the Lieutenant-Governor exercized a virtual dictatorship over the government of the Territories, there was little demand for extended representation in the west until settlement from the east began to seep into the prairies. These eastern Canadians, long accustomed to responsible government at both the federal and provincial levels, soon began to ask for the extension of these rights to the west.[44]

These demands were given much greater range and emphasis by the growth of western newspapers.[45] In southern Alberta, two ex-servicemen, E.T. Saunders and C.E.D. Wood, began the Macleod Gazette in 1882.[46] They had been preceded by Frank Oliver's Edmonton Bulletin two years previously. Wood and Saunders began agitation for federal representation quite early, writing in 1883 that:

> Our district, with its varied stock, agricultural and minings interests will be particularly in need of representation ere long.[47]

A second paper destined to become the most important Conservative organ in the district, the Calgary Herald, was founded in 1884 by Joseph Armour and T.B. Braden. Although the paper experienced serious financial difficulties and several management changes up until 1894, it too began quite early to assert the right of the west to representation.[48]

A year after the founding of the Herald, E.T. "Si" Saunders split with Wood and moved on to the greener pastures of Lethbridge to establish the Lethbridge News. The News, like its southern counterparts agitated for parliamentary representation.[49]

It is notable that all the southern papers associated parliamentary representation with the development of the west. It was assumed that once the demands of the west were made evident in Ottawa by able representation, the federal government would begin to show increased interest in western development. In fact, most western papers associated the development with the growth of Canada's stature as a nation. Thus Frank Oliver wrote in 1883:

> In the Northwest alone is the full confidence in the glorious future of Canada expressed, for it is only in this region of boundless possibilities that this future can be conceived or built up. . ..[50]

Representation in parliament was viewed as one of the most important methods of making the potential of the west known.

Although agitation for parliamentary representation began with the newspapers, it soon moved into the Territorial Council. In both 1883 and 1885, the Council petitioned the government for federal representation. The 1883 petition gave some indication of the importance attached to sending western MP's to Ottawa. It said,

> the success of the Northwest Territories is of such importance to the whole Dominion that representation for the Territories should be in Parliament. . ..[51]

Pleas from the Council were followed by mass meetings throughout the west pressing the same issue on the government. In both Calgary and Macleod, meetings were held in late 1884 and early 1885, at which time resolutions were put forward demanding both parliamentary representation and the erection of the Territorial Assembly to replace the Council.[52]

1885 proved to be a fateful year for the west and for the movement urging representation. In that year, a census was taken which most westerners felt would mean the grant of representation in a very short time.[53] Perhaps more importantly, the Riel Rebellion proved to be a major factor in shattering the indifference the Macdonald government had previously shown to western demands.[54]

Most Territorial papers, although siding with the crushing of the rebellious metis and Indians, used the rebellion as an opportunity to reproach the federal government for its lack of concern with the west. In July of 1885, the Gazette predicted "constantly recurring agitations and plainly manifested discontent," unless the government showed greater interest and consideration for the west.[55] A year later when parliamentary representation was finally granted, the Herald could not refrain from chiding the Macdonald administration for its tardiness, saying:

> If it [representation] had been granted a year and a half ago, the rebellion might have been averted.[56]

In April of 1886, Macdonald introduced legislation providing the west with four representatives; one for Alberta, two for Assiniboia and one for Saskatchewan. Because of its sparse population, Athabaska was not granted a member.[57] Although the move was applauded in western papers, it did not quite follow the earlier suggestions of Alberta papers. The Herald felt that Alberta should be given two members, one for the all-important ranching country, and one for the remainder of the district.[58] The Gazette suggested that Alberta be split more arbitrarily between north and south rather than between the ranching country and the remainder of the district.[59]

Both papers were in fact recognizing a geographical and economic division of the district which was not clearly marked by any administrative boundary but which nevertheless existed. Geography, economics and the railway had combined to produce a definite division between north and south Alberta. This division and the competition between the two regions it implies was a major factor in the political development of the district during the period under study, and remained so long after provincial status was accorded in 1905.

By 1887, the stage had been set for the political development of Alberta. Federal representation had been provided for, and a Territorial Assembly promised in 1888. By 1887 too, the political issues which were to dominate the district had already emerged clearly. The most important of these were sectional rivalries between north and south, metropolitan conflicts and the need for federal aid in the development of the district. These three questions were the basis for most of the political contests in Alberta from 1887 to 1904.

FOOTNOTES

[1] L.H. Thomas, *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the Northwest Territories: 1869-1897*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 97.

[2] *Ibid*. The areas of the districts ranged from 95,000 to 122,000 square miles.

[3] *Atlas of Western Canada*, (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1901), p. 30.

[4] Canada, *Second Census of Canada*, Vol. I.

[5] Paul Sharp, *Whoop-Up Country: The Canadian-American West 1865-1885*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), p. 214.

[6] Cecil Denny, *The Law Marches West*, (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1934), p. 177.

[7] *Edmonton Bulletin*, 17 December 1881. The *Bulletin* carried a list of the major communities in the district.

[8] L.G. Thomas, "The Rancher and the City: Calgary and the Cattlemen, 1883-1914," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, VI, Ser. IV (June 1968), p. 203.

[9] Max Foran, "The Birth and Expansion of Calgary 1875-1905," paper presented to the Urban History Conference, University of Winnipeg, October, 1975, p. 2.

[10] Marianne Molyneux, "Early Days in Alberta," *Alberta Historical Review*, III, no. 2 (Spring 1960), p. 7.

[11] Foran, *op*. *cit*., p. 1-18.

[12] G.H. Ham, *The New West*, (Winnipeg: Canadian Historical Publishing Company, 1888), p. 127.

[13] R.M. Dawe, "An Investigation into the Development of the Red Deer Community in Relation to the Development of Western Canada," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1954), p. 16.

[14] *Edmonton Bulletin*, 17 December 1881.

[15] G.F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, (London: Longmans Green and Company, 1936), p. 186.

[16] J.G. MacEwan, *Calgary Cavalcade*, (Edmonton: Institute of Applied Art Ltd., 1958), p. 35-39.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] A.A. den Otter, "Alexander Galt and the Northwest: A study in Frontier Entrepreneurialism," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1973), p. 53.

[19] *Ibid*., p. 157.

[20] F.G. Bundy, "In the Foothills of the Rockies," in *Southern Alberta, History and Tale*, vol. I, p. 21. *Southern Alberta, History and Tale* is part of the Alberta Folklore Collection housed in the Rare Book Room of the University of Alberta.

[21] John Warkentin, "Western Canada in 1886," in Papers read before the *Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba*, Series III, no. 20, (1963-1964), p. 106.

[22] David H. Breen, "The Cattle Compact: The Ranch Community in Southern Alberta 1881-1896," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Calgary, 1969), p. 6-18.

[23] Warkentin, *op*. *cit*., p. 107. Warkentin quoting from Oliver.

[24] *Atlas of Western Canada* *op*. *cit*., p. 30.

[25] Breen, "The Cattle Compact," p. 6-18.

[26] *Ibid*., p. 28.

[27] L.G. Thomas, *op*. *cit*., p. 204.

[28] David H. Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier: 1875-1922," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972), p. 155-156. Breen notes that A.M. Burgess, Deputy Minister of the Interior, and William Pearce, Superintendent of Mines, were both strong supporters of the ranching community.

[29] den Otter, *op*. *cit*., p. 239n.

[30] J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism and Canadian History," *Canadian Historical Review*, XXXV (March, 1954), p. 1-21.

[31] den Otter, *op*. *cit*., p. 209.

[32] P.N. Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies, 1871-1916," *Social History*, vol. 8, no. 15, 1975, p. 101.

[33] den Otter, *op*. *cit*., p. 212.

[34] *Ibid*., p. 243.

[35] P.F.W. Rutherford, "The Western Press and Regionalism, 1870-1896," *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. LII, no. 3, (September 1971), p. 289.

[36] A case in point is the rivalry between Lethbridge and Macleod for a post office. This conflict will be treated more fully in the next chapter.

[37] Rutherford, op. cit., p. 301.

[38] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 76.

[39] Ibid., p. 89.

[40] John Blue, The History of Alberta, vol. I, (Chicago: Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1924), p. 106.

[41] Breen, "The Canadian West," p. 112-113.

[42] Breen, "The Cattle Compact," p. 43.

[43] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 152. An Assembly was finally granted in the spring of 1888. Thomas notes the federal government's hesitation in the matter was another example of "the government's temporizing and Conservative approach to the constitutional progress of the Northwest." Ibid., p. 152.

[44] E.H. Oliver, The Prairie Provinces, vol. 19 of Canadian and Its Provinces, ed., A. Shortt and A. Doughty, (Toronto: Glasgow Brook and Company, 1914), p. 214.

[45] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 123. Thomas notes that the emergence of public interest in political matters was "stimulated by additions to the ranks of Northwest journalism," and further points out that two prairie journalists--Frank Oliver and N.F. Davin--made journalism the basis for political careers. To these two could be added C.E.D. Wood's numerous unsuccessful attempts at civic and Territorial campaigns, and the more successful political careers of Hugh Cayley and J.J. Young, both of the Calgary Herald.

[46] MacEwan, op. cit., p. 47. D.W. Davis, later Alberta's first MP, gave Wood $150.00 to start the paper.

[47] Macleod Gazette, 14 May 1883.

[48] Calgary Herald, 27 October 1884.

[49] Lethbridge News, 11 December 1885.

[50] Cited in Rutherford, op. cit., p. 292n.

[51] C.B. Koester, "The Agitation for Parliamentary Representation of the Northwest Territories 1879-1887," Saskatchewan History, vol. XXVI, no. 1, (Winter 1973), p. 14.

[52] Macleod Gazette, 14 December 1884, 2 January 1885. The Gazette carried the news of the Calgary meeting.

[53] Calgary Herald, 12 August 1885.

[54] Koester, op. cit., p. 23.

[55] Macleod Gazette, 14 July 1885.

[56] Calgary Herald, 6 March 1886.

[57] Koester, op. cit., p. 23.

[58] Calgary Herald, 12 August 1885.

[59] Macleod Gazette, 17 October 1884.

CHAPTER I

THE 1887 ELECTION POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND DISSENSION IN THE RANKS

Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's announcement in April 1886 that the Northwest was to be granted federal representation in the 1887 general election was greeted with enthusiasm in the west.[1] Federal representation meant the opening of a more effective line of communication to the federal government than had previously existed through the Territorial Council.[2] Since the federal government was, for the most part, responsible for the distribution of monies granted to the Territories, representation in Ottawa meant an opportunity for westerners to place their financial requirements directly before the government.[3]

Such an opportunity was, of course, applauded by most westerners. However, the fact that representation was only granted to the Territories after repeated requests and protestations by western spokesmen resulted in a "better late than never" attitude on the part of some westerners, while in extreme cases it occasioned an outright denunciation of the federal government and its ignorance of western needs.[4]

Reaction to the federal policy was largely determined by party affiliation. For the most part, Conservatives in Alberta applauded the government's action, while Liberals tended to emphasize the late grant of federal representation as yet another example of the Conservatives' neglect of the west.

In the district of Alberta, the most important source of political opinion was the local newspaper. By 1886, five major papers existed in the district. They were: the Calgary Herald, founded in 1883 T.B. Braden and J. Armour; the Calgary Tribune, founded in 1885 also by Braden and P. Railee; the Macleod Gazette, founded in 1882 by C.E.D. Wood and E.T. Saunders; the Lethbridge News, founded in 1885 by E.T. Saunders; and finally the Edmonton Bulletin, Alberta's oldest paper, founded in 1880 by Frank Oliver.[5] Three of these, the Gazette, the News and the Herald, were Conservative, while the Bulletin and the Tribune had Liberal affiliations. These papers played a key role in the organization of political parties and in bringing the campaign to the public in 1887.

For some western spokesmen however, the opportunity for the expression of party affiliation at the polls created some difficulty. This was particularly true of C.E.D. Wood, who had previously supported a non-partisan stance in western politics. Wood fully supported the grant of representation; in October of 1886 he had written: "We want representation--we have a right to it."[6] Representation was not the problem however; partyism was. In this context Wood noted that with the upcoming federal election there had been an upsurge in Conservative and Liberal party activity in the district and wrote that:

> The result has been that the Northwest has thrown off its old state of neutrality and has divided much on the lines of the two great parties of the east.[7]

For men like Wood, the introduction of eastern politics meant a breakdown in the unity of purpose that had bound the Northwest into one voice demanding Ottawa's attention to the needs of the west.

That non-partisan spirit that Wood advocated, and which was to so dominate Territorial politics, sought federal expression when the announcement of federal representation was made. A group of prominent Albertans of both political parties formed the Northwest League in early April 1886. The League's aim was to unite the people of the Territories "of all shades of politics upon a common platform to work for the advancement of the Northwest Territories." Among the members of the League were Dr. James Lafferty, soon to be a Liberal candidate in the 1887 election, and James Lougheed, prominent member of the Calgary Conservative Association, and future Conservative Senator.[8] The failure of the League to field a candidate in the 1887 election or to generate any significant public interest marked the failure of non-partisan politics at the federal level in Alberta.

In terms of party affiliation however, there does seem to have been little ideological identification in the West with either the Conservative or Liberal parties. Thus the characterization of western politics as being pragmatically oriented towards the development of the west rather than committed to the philosophies of either of the two major political parties seems to have a great deal of merit.[9] Political disputes seemed not so much the result of ideological differences as the product of local or sectional rivalries. This is borne out by even the most superficial reading of the papers of the day. For example, the Calgary Tribune noted that the dominant feature of political feeling in Alberta was "local jealousy."[10] These local rivalries, and the residue of non-partisan politics made political organization in Alberta a rather difficult task before its first Dominion election.

Despite these difficulties, those papers which did support the Conservative cause strongly were quick to take up the banner when announcement of federal representation was made. Editor Saunders of the News had been a constant supporter of the Macdonald administration since the paper's first edition in 1885. Despite his loyal Conservatism however, Saunders was rather cautious in his initial reaction to the grant of representation. He noted that there were certain party questions which should not be introduced into the west, but at the same time took issue with Wood's non-partisan stance. For Saunders, the solution to the problem of remaining loyal to both the Northwest and the Conservative party was that "our members must be both 'Northwest first' and Conservative."[11]

Saunders was fully aware of the danger of a western MP being solely a party man and thus under the direction of purely party considerations, but at the same time he sensed the difficulties an independent member would face in a parliament dominated by party loyalties. Thus he emphasized that

> any man who goes to Ottawa . . . must give a general adherence to one or other of the great parties in order to be a useful and intelligent representative.[12]

His support for the Conservative party was therefore based on a belief in the developmental benefits of the Conservatives' National Policy, while he realized that the west must adopt party lines in order to make its demands felt in Ottawa.

Following this defence of partisan political activity, Saunders became an enthusiastic and vocal champion of the Conservative cause in Alberta. In July of 1886 he first advocated the formation of local party organizations, and continued to do so throughout the summer and early fall of that year.[13] Despite this early call to the faithful, it took a great deal of time to finally bring about political organization in the district.

The Calgary Association was the oldest in the district. Its first officers were selected in January 1886, with Joseph Millward as President and Charles Watson as Secretary.[14] In line with its position as the first and largest association in the district, the Calgary Association took the lead in the political organization of Alberta. They divided the district into three separate areas corresponding to the three judicial divisions in Alberta. Each of these was eligible to send 20 delegates to the nominating convention to be held in Calgary in the last week in January.[15] Millward and the Calgary executive also urged the formation of local associations in Pine Creek, High River, Edmonton and Macleod, and advocated that these locals send delegates to a central association to be formed during the convention.[16]

It was not until November that the Lethbridge Association was formed. In his efforts, Saunders was aided by the Calgary Association who, through their secretary, Charles Watson, had sent a letter which Saunders published urging the formation of a local association.[17] In mid-November, an organizational meeting was finally held in Lethbridge. Harry Bently, a prominent Lethbridge storeowner was appointed chairman, while Saunders himself was appointed secretary. Little was actually accomplished at this meeting beyond deciding to communicate with the Calgary Association with respect to sending a delegate to the general nominating convention.[18]

Actual formation of a Lethbridge Association was delayed until January of 1887. Two important steps were taken at this time. The executive for the year was chosen, and it was decided to send six voting delegates to the Calgary nominating convention to be held on January 27.[19] In line with his important role in the formation of the association, Saunders was made both secretary-treasurer and appointed as a delegate to the Calgary convention. The remainder of the executive was composed of local businessmen.[20]

Although the establishment of a Macleod Association actually predated that of Lethbridge, it had only been accomplished with the conversion of Wood to a partisan stance. Wood's early independence had always been tempered by Conservative sympathies, and when a Conservative Association was finally formed in late December 1886, Wood became its first secretary, with the rest of the executive representing business and ranching interests.[21]

By January 1887, Wood had completely abandoned his earlier non-partisan stance and was urging both Lethbridge and Pincher Creek to form local associations.[22] His political about-face seems to have been the result of the same type of argument that Saunders had used against independent politics. Like Saunders, he feared an independent western MP simply would not have the government's ear. Thus he wrote:

> The election of an 'Independent' candidate simply means that a perfect non-entity is sent to represent the people--one whom neither party cares to affiliate with, and one whom the leaders of a political party cannot trust.[23]

As previously noted, the most dominant factor in Alberta politics was local jealousy. Of the various local rivalries in the district, the most important in the 1887 election was the struggle between the area north of Calgary and the south for political supremacy in Alberta. Roughly, the district was divided into two portions of approximately equal size. Calgary was the midpoint, and became the pivotal point in the 1887 election contest.[24]

In the south, despite the delay in the formation of local political organizations, a strong candidate for the Conservative nomination emerged--D.W. Davis. He was an employee of the I.G. Baker Company which operated out of Fort Benton, Montana, but had its Canadian headquarters in Macleod. The Company was heterogeneous in character, ranging from the sale of dry goods to ranching. As an employee of the Company therefore, Davis commanded the support not only of ranchers but also of a large section of the non-ranching community.[25]

Davis himself had had a varied career in the west. Born in Vermont in 1848, he had fought in the latter stages of the Civil War, and then returned to farming in his home state. In 1870, he had decided to follow his fortune west, and had joined the trading company of Heely and Hamilton which, like the Baker Company, operated out of Fort Benton. Part of Davis' time working for this company was spent working in Fort Whoop-Up in southwestern Alberta, and in fact he was one of the whiskey traders who had been driven out of the Fort by the approach of the Northwest Mounted Police in 1874.[26]

After working for Heely and Hamilton for five years, Davis joined I.G. Baker. Baker's extensive interests in the Northwest took him to Calgary where he worked for three years, from 1875 to 1878. During this time Davis had the opportunity to make several trading trips to the northern half of the district. The fact that he became well acquainted with most of Alberta through his business dealings was to stand him in good stead during the 1887 election. In 1878, he was transferred back to Macleod where he was given supervision of Baker's operations in the whole Canadian Northwest. He retained this position until 1887.[27]

Because of his position with one of the larger trading and ranching companies in Alberta, and given the fact of his long-time residence in the south, Davis was first put forward as a Conservative candidate in Macleod in early January 1887.[28] Lethbridge failed to support Davis, principally due to the delay in the formation of a Lethbridge Association. At any rate, from Saunders' previously expressed desires for a local Conservative candidate, it was obvious his support would lie with Davis.[29]

From the strong support Davis eventually received in the south, particularly around Macleod and Lethbridge, it was evident that the south identified its interests closely with his candidacy. In reporting his nomination in Macleod, the Gazette wrote that Davis was

> a gentleman who has very large interests at stake in the country and whose interests are clearly allied with those of the country generally.[30]

The News echoed these sentiments and mentioned further that Davis' I.G. Baker connections would ensure his devotion to the country's interests.[31]

If the ranching community of the south heartily supported Davis, there were some members of the Calgary Association who were somewhat less than enthusiastic about his candidacy.[32] In fact, certain members of that association had another candidate in mind--Richard Hardisty, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Edmonton.

Hardisty, like Davis, had had a long career in the Northwest.[33] Nevertheless, much of his interest and activity had been centred on the north, and in fact, he was not at all popular in the south. This unpopularity was largely related to his association with the Bay Company and was the result of their activities in the south. Hardisty's brother-in-law was the Methodist missionary John Mcdougall. Mcdougall and his fraternal brother combined their religious activities with a certain amount of trading for the Hudson's Bay Company. When these commercial activities were extended into the south, Mcdougall ran afoul of the many independent traders in that region and the Baker Company as well. Hardisty, as the most prominent official of the Bay Company in Alberta, and as a relative of the much disliked Mcdougall, thus would face a great deal of difficulty in gaining the support of the south if he received the nomination as Conservative candidate.[34]

Despite the opposition that was to be expected from the south, a large number of the executive of the Calgary Association backed Hardisty. This was in part due to his prominence, and also because of his residence in Calgary for several years. Among his Calgary supporters were James Reilly, future mayor of Calgary; Joseph Millward, president of the local association; Charles Watson, association secretary; and James Lougheed. They were joined in their support by the most prominent Conservative in Red Deer, Reverent Leonard Gaetz, and also by the prairie journalist, Alexander Begg.[35]

In addition to the support of these prominent local men, Hardisty also enjoyed the support of federal Conservatives as well. Prime Minister Macdonald had expressed his approval of Hardisty in reply to a telegram seeking clarification of this issue from W.B. Scarth. Macdonald had noted: "Position is this, Hardisty was acceptable to me. I so stated to every enquirer."[36]

Hardisty thus came out in response to a draft movement by high level local and federal Tories. These men had assured him of his nomination and his inevitable election victory. Hardisty had even received support from the prominent Galt Coal Company of Lethbridge.[37] He may therefore have been excused if such wide-ranging support went to his head somewhat. Writing to the Hudson's Bay Commissioner in Winnipeg, John Wrigley, Hardisty noted:

> If the people want me to represent them so badly in Ottawa, they better do the work. I am not one to get up and deliver political speeches, that is not my line.[38]

Hardisty was confident, he expected the election would be a foregone conclusion, and he made it plain from the outset that he would indulge in no political footwork. If they wanted him so desperately they could do the work themselves. His prospects of success were even further enhanced by verbal assurances of support from Frank Oliver, the most prominent Liberal in Alberta.[39] Such seemingly massive support should have led to his assured nomination at the Conservative convention, and to an easy and substantial victory at the polls.

Such was not the case however. Hardisty failed to capture the Conservative nomination and ran a fairly distant second in the election despite pledges of early support. His failure can be attributed specifically to three reasons.

First, Hardisty was an independent, although it was obvious he had Conservative leanings and enjoyed the support of many prominent Conservatives.[40] This independent stance rankled the editors of both the News and the Gazette. It will be remembered that Saunders of the News had, from the outset of the announcement of federal representation, denounced any attempt to field an independent candidate. Both he and Wood had expressed the fear that an independent member could not adequately represent the needs of the district simply because neither of the two major parties would listen to an independent. It was on this very issue that Wood had dropped his non-partisan stance for one of strong party affiliation. Thus it apparently was felt in the south that however attractive an independent candidate might be as an individual, he would not be able to represent the district adequately.

The second factor in Hardisty's failure to gain the Conservative nomination was his inability to attract the support of the south. This was the direct result of the sectional rivalry between the north and south in the district. As early as May of 1886, Saunders had advocated that "the cattle country should be given a representative of its own."[41] This regional identification was largely based on economic interest as the above statement shows. The ranching country of the south had given rise to an active ranching community which formed the social, economic and political elite of the district.[42] This community had long been opposed to settlement activity in the south, and had traditionally looked to Ottawa rather than to Regina to protect its interests.[43]

As a northerner, furthermore, Hardisty represented settlement interests in the eyes of the ranchers. And as an important official of the Hudson's Bay Company he represented a potential rival to the Baker Company which had been closely identified with the interests of the south.[44] Thus, the regional rivalry which had developed in Alberta because of differing economic activities tended to work against Hardisty in the south.

A final factor in Hardisty's failure to gain the nomination was the issue of control. In pushing for Hardisty's nomination without consulting the view of the south on the question, the Calgary Association alienated many southern Conservatives.

On the eve of the convention, the News had emphasized this point, noting that the candidate chosen should be favored throughout the district.[45] The Gazette also attacked the Calgary Association for its arbitrary actions. Wood centred particularly on the Conservative organ in Calgary, the Herald, denouncing what he considered to be the Herald's attempt to become the sole Conservative mouthpiece in the district. He complained that

> its [the Herald's] vain desire to be the only Conservative organ in the district has run away with what little common sense it ever possessed.[46]

These disputes between the Calgary Association and the Conservative locals in the south spilled over onto the nominating floor when the southern delegates refused to submit to the domination of the Calgary Association.

The approach of the convention must have been anticipated with a good deal of trepidation on the part of Alberta Conservatives. On the one hand, a large portion of the membership, the federal Tories and the Herald were committed to Hardisty, while on the other, the local associations of the south were in rebellion, resentful at having a northern independent forced upon them by Calgary, and solidly backing their own candidate, Davis. In fact the only individuals looking forward to the convention were the Liberals who sat on the sidelines hoping the Conservatives would tear themselves apart on January 27.

Hardisty himself viewed the evolving crisis within the party with increasing uncertainty. Despite all the support which had been mobilized behind him, the revolt of the south left him unsure about his decision to run. He had expected some opposition from the south but its extent by January 1887 made him uneasy.[47]

When it became apparent by mid-January that a Conservative convention was to be called, Hardisty felt more uncertain than ever. He had expected no such development. He wrote of the convention, "I cannot say what the upshot of this is," and noted at the same time that there was no support for such a convention in Edmonton.[48]

Those Calgary Conservatives supporting Hardisty were, by this time, also painfully aware of the growing opposition to him in the south. President Millward, Edmonton Conservative J.R. Costigan and others telegraphed W.B. Scarth, Macdonald's political organizer in the west, suggesting that the convention could be somehow manipulated to support Hardisty if instructions to that effect were sent from Ottawa.[49] Hardisty's campaign staff itself was very concerned with the possible outcome of the convention, and considered condemning both the convention and its nominee despite the ill effects such a move would have on their political fortunes in the south.[50]

Faced with the prospect of being opposed by a strong candidate from the south, Hardisty looked increasingly to the north as his base of support. In mid-January he bitterly attacked the Calgary Association for attempting to control the political activities of the whole district, and boasted that the north would vote solidly in his favor while the south would be split by the factions which had developed over his potential candidacy.[51]

The confrontation expected between pro and anti-Hardisty forces at the convention never materialized however. The whole issue of Hardisty's candidacy was effectively resolved at the January 20 meeting of the Calgary Association at which time delegates for the convention were selected. At that meeting, Henry Bleecker, a member of the associations' executive committee and a leader of the anti-Hardisty faction within the association, proposed the nomination of 16 anti-Hardisty delegates which amounted to the total number of delegates assigned to Calgary. This move was strongly opposed by the pro-Hardisty group led by James Reilly. Reilly noted that the south was already solidly behind Davis, and that as a counter-weight, Calgary should at least nominate sufficient uncommitted delegates to give her the deciding vote in the convention. Another pro-Hardisty man, James Lougheed, also emphasized that the convention was purely a southern phenomenon, and that it would not be accepted in the north. Despite the objection of the Hardisty group, however, a majority of Bleecker's nominations were approved, and Hardisty's nomination effectively blocked.[52]

Thus the convention passed off on January 27 without Hardisty putting in an appearance. Only one northern nominee, J.R. Costigan was presented to the convention and, with the exception of Davis, the remainder, John Lineham, Henry Bleecker and Henry Monroe, were all Calgary men. Davis won easily on the fourth ballot by a vote of 39 to 1 over Costigan.[53]

From an examination of the list of delegates at the convention, it is apparent that the convention was very much southern in character. None of the 40 delegates came from north of Calgary where no Conservative associations had been constituted as yet, and only the ranching country, comprising Macleod, Pincher Creek and Lethbridge sent a full complement of 20 men. The Calgary contingent of 16 was reduced to 12 because of the objections of the southern locals that it was too large, and the resulting 4 vacant positions were filled by assigning 2 delegates each to Pine Creek and Banff. The remaining 4 positions were filled by 2 delegates each from Sheep Creek and High River.[54]

Assuming the south voted solidly for Davis, the convention at best could have resulted in a standoff between Davis and one of the other candidates. Given the factional nature of the Calgary Association however, the Davis nomination was made inevitable.

In addition to selecting a candidate, the convention also elected a central executive to coordinate political activity in the district and establish the rules for the eligibility of delegates to future conventions. A.R. Lucas, publisher of the Calgary Herald was elected central association president, while Charles McMillan, Calgary representative of the monolithic Canada Northwest Land Company, was elected secretary. The vice-presidents were to be the presidents of the various local associations throughout the district.[55] Given the difficulty of both communication and travel during this period, it appears obvious that control of the central executive rested almost solely in the hands of the Calgary Association.

While the convention had been building the basis for a strong political organization, Hardisty had continued with his own plans for the election as an independent. His staff relied on a solid northern vote and a southern split in voters between Davis and the Liberal nominee to ensure his victory. There was even some hope of support, in the south, for despite his apparent rejection by the Conservative party, Hardisty still enjoyed the support of some high-level Conservatives. Remaining among the faithful were Charles Watson, former secretary of the Calgary Association, Reverend Gaetz of Red Deer, and at the federal level, Donald Smith and Minister of the Interior Thomas White.[56]

In fact, even before the results of the convention were known, Hardisty's camp had been busily organizing their campaign. Writing to Gaetz on January 25, Watson had noted that Gaetz would likely be appointed enumerator for the Red Deer district. He urged Gaetz to use this position to

> see that all names of all parties eligible or otherwise, who are likely to vote for us are placed on the list, and all men whose votes are doubtful for us should, as far as the laws allow, be left off.

In addition to these moves, Watson also suggested that enfranchised Indians be used as far as possible to swell the northern vote.[57]

Hardisty was thus prepared to fight the election without the endorsation of the Conservative party in Alberta, but for those Conservatives still supporting him, this was not enough. Even after his rejection by the party, attempts were made by both local and federal Tories to bring Hardisty back into the fold and dump Davis.

At the federal level both White and Smith repeatedly urged Macdonald to force Davis out of the campaign. In February of 1887, Smith wrote Macdonald of the struggle between Davis and Hardisty, urged him to force Davis to retire, and reminded Macdonald that "but for your letter to encourage him, Hardisty would not have been a candidate."[58] Smith's objection to Davis was probably more than political. As a Hudson's Bay Company official himself, he undoubtedly felt he owed Hardisty all the support he could give him. White also urged Macdonald to take steps to push Davis out of the election, warned that Hardisty was thinking of retiring himself, and predicted that if both Davis and Hardisty stayed in the field, there was some danger of the Liberal candidate, Dr. Lafferty, being elected.[59]

Macdonald's failure to act to force Davis out may have been the result of his realization of the damage such a move would do to the Conservative cause in Alberta. In a reply to a telegram from W.B. Scarth, Macdonald noted his support for Hardisty, but also emphasized, "cannot dictate, but have suggested no other man."[60] Thus while Macdonald gave his support to Hardisty, he refused to interfere with the right of the local association to select its own candidate. On the other hand, it is possible Macdonald was not greatly concerned over the affairs of a remote western constituency.

Whatever the reason behind Macdonald's lack of action, this much is clear; any attempt to force Davis out of the campaign would have merely increased the hostility of the southern Conservatives to both the Calgary and federal Associations. At the height of the campaign, Wood telegraphed Macdonald that it was imperative that some show of federal support be given to Davis. He noted:

> Important to have your authority for saying government favors Conservative candidate in Alberta. Not the independent.[61]

Thus even knowing that Hardisty enjoyed federal support, Wood was still insistent that the federal party publicly support Davis.

The Conservative press of the south was very much aware that Hardisty had been the original choice of the federal Conservatives. Despite this knowledge, they were not prepared to submit meekly to the dictation of either the Calgary Association or the federal party. In March, Wood wrote a long editorial denouncing the principle of government nominees as being foreign to the "right" of local associations to select their own standard bearers. At the same time, he noted that because Hardisty was the choice of the government, his "vaunted" independence was seriously in doubt.[62]

Wood's attack on the federal government and Hardisty set out the issues of the campaign very clearly. The election was not to be a struggle between Liberals and Conservatives, but rather between north and south, local versus regional and federal control of politics, and independent politics versus party affiliation.

The Calgary convention was the real starting point for the campaign, and soon after the candidates placed their cases before the public. The election itself was slated for March 15. The candidates used mainly two vehicles to set their platforms before the public. Political platforms were published in the form of manifestos in all the major newspapers, and extensive speaking tours were set up for the candidates.

Nevertheless, Hardisty and Davis adopted differing approaches to campaigning during the course of the election. Hardisty concentrated virtually all his efforts on his home ground in the north, relying on the remaining faithful Calgary Conservatives to carry the campaign in the south. Davis, on the other hand, secure in his stronghold in the south, left most of the work there in the hands of his supporters and concentrated much of his campaign in the north.[63]

With men like Hugh Cayley and Bleecker in Calgary, and a solid southern vote, and given the fact that the Conservatives controlled three of the five major papers in the district, Davis could afford to canvass the north as thoroughly as possible. There he was ably assisted by J.R. Costigan who had opposed him during the Calgary convention. Despite this, the rigor of his work for Davis was attested to by the attitude of the Hardisty camp toward Costigan and his political activities.

Writing to J.H. Thompson in February, an Edmonton supporter of Hardisty noted that Costigan "keeps moving and treating drinks which, of course, draws a lot of talk . . . ."[64]

The third candidate in the field was the Liberal, Dr. Lafferty. The Calgary doctor had been nominated on February 11 at a Liberal party convention held in Calgary. Lafferty, like both Davis and Hardisty, published his platform in manifesto form and travelled extensively throughout the district. Unlike the other two, however, he did not concentrate his campaign on a single region, but rather spent equal time in both. Having neither a northern nor a southern base of support, however, Lafferty labored valiantly with only a remote possibility of election.[65]

Unlike Davis, the party he represented was not in power. Since local communities depended on federal funds for local improvements, a vote for a party likely to remain in opposition was seen as a wasted vote.[66] Distribution of patronage and western development depended, in the eyes of the electors, on sending a government member to Ottawa. In addition to this, Lafferty was further hampered by the Liberal party's stance on such issues as rail policy and western development. Western Conservative newspapers heaped much scorn on the Liberals throughout the election as representing an anti-development philosophy, and thus being opposed to the growth of the west.[67] Conservative policy was represented as being firmly associated with western development. As Wood noted, "only in the hands of the Conservative party can the interests of the west flourish."[68]

Added to these difficulties was the fact that Lafferty was caught in the same sectional split that had threatened to destroy the

Conservatives. Liberals in southern Alberta were reminded by Conservative papers that a vote for Lafferty would strengthen Hardisty at the expense of Davis, because Lafferty had little chance of winning the election. Thus:

> Every vote polled for Dr. Lafferty in this district will strengthen Mr. Hardisty and weaken Mr. Davis without in the least helping the man voted for.[69]

If that were not enough, northern Liberals tended to identify with Hardisty rather than with Lafferty. In fact, Frank Oliver had already openly avowed his support for Hardisty.[70] The Hardisty camp itself carried sectional rivalry to such an extreme that they suggested that Lafferty had been brought out by Davis for the sole purpose of drawing off votes from Hardisty in the north.[71]

Given these adverse conditions, Lafferty was very much the forgotten man in the election, and his campaign was accurately characterized by Saunders as little more than an attempt "to keep alive the feeble spark of Gritism in the district."[72]

The public campaign opened with the publication of the programs of the candidates. All three centred their platforms on the need for faster western development and the provision for more local services like land registries and post offices. However, one can see a difference in emphasis between the programs of Hardisty and Davis which reveals the sectional differences which so dominated the campaign.

Davis opened his platform with a hearty endorsation of Macdonald and the Conservative party. He cited the building of the CPR, the grant of federal representation and the creation of an efficient judicial system as examples of the Macdonald government's concern with the needs of the west. He stressed that the contribution of the Conservative government to western growth was "greater than any government has done for any portion of the Dominion."[73] In line with his emphasis on development, the major portion of his platform was devoted to growth-oriented promises. He advocated the creation of a "complete system of self-government"; increased allowances for schools and public works; a system of school finance using school lands; that Territorial appointments be made local appointments; rapid settlement of rebellion losses claims; an extended public works and bridge building program; the opening of odd-numbered sections to homesteading; the removal of reserves to remote areas, and the opening of existing reserves for settlement; a Royal commission to look into the grazing leases question and the problems between leaseholder and settlers; the placing of mining laws on the same level as homestead laws had been under the 1872 homestead regulations; and greater representation for Alberta in the Territorial Assembly. He also promised to adhere to majority opinion in the district on the lease question.[74]

Davis' platform seemed fairly comprehensive, but two omissions revealed a peculiarly southern bias. He refused to commit himself to a stand on the grazing lease question. In the face of much adverse public criticism against ranchers and leases, Davis would only acknowledge that certain differences existed between ranchers and settlers. He would not commit himself however to any program of open leases or lease cancellation.[75] Both as a rancher himself, and as an I.G. Baker man, Davis' interests and sympathies were closely bound up with the ranching industry, and he naturally attempted to protect that industry as much as possible.

The second issue which was conspicuous by its absence from Davis' platform was the problem of the CPR monopoly. Failure to protest against the monopoly was widely interpreted as amounting to support for the railway, and again demonstrated a peculiarly southern viewpoint. Davis' support of the CPR was dictated by his strong identification with the Conservative party which had staked its political fortunes on the completion of the rail line. As well, as a respresentative of the ranching community, Davis supported the CPR because it provided a market link to the lucrative beef markets of eastern Canada and Britain. Rail construction and extension could nevertheless have been a mixed blessing, especially in the southwest. Ranchers in this area feared that an influx of settlers and harmful competition for the range lands would result from rail extension in the south. With the maintenance of the monopoly, however, the ranchers felt they had the best of both worlds; rail links to wider markets, but at the same time insurance against extensive and damaging settlement through the ban on rail construction.[76] Davis' support of the CPR therefore was based on party loyalty, and on regional interests. This identification with region was doubly strong because Davis represented a powerful ranching elite which aimed at preserving its economic investment in the south.

If Davis' platform reflected his southern interests, so Hardisty's program represented a more northern outlook. As his independent stance dictated, Hardisty called himself a "Northwest First" man, and advocated non-partisan politics in the west. He also denied any link between his candidacy and the dictation of the Hudson's Bay Company. As to his concrete proposals, Hardisty made a strong bid for metis support, promising early settlement of the government scrip question, he pressed for the rapid settlement of all rebellion claims; advocated that contracts for Indian and government supplies be given to local residents to compensate northerners for the absence of rail lines in the north; he urged the rapid extension of rail services into the Mackenzie country and supported the abolition of the CPR monopoly; he proposed that timber limits be granted on the condition of exploitation to keep land out of the hands of speculators; and finally advocated that the Territories be granted a Legislative Assembly in place of a Council.[77]

Hardisty's emphasis on rail extension, opposition to the CPR monopoly and advocacy that Territorial contracts be let locally all display a more northern outlook than that of Davis. He failed to consider the lease question in any of its aspects. The north had no large grazing areas, and consequently no conflict between rancher and settler. Its real need was for railways, and Hardisty's campaign was accordingly centred on that subject.

Lafferty's campaign did not appeal to one particular portion of the district. He favored abolition of the CPR monopoly and the cancellation of all cattle leases within two years. His only innovative plank was his support for the abolition of the liquor permit system and the introduction of local option.[78]

Although his platform was all-encompassing, it earned Lafferty more abuse than praise. Political lines had already been drawn in the district on a regional basis, and in attempting to straddle the boundary between the two areas, Lafferty was attacked by both sides.

In referring to his stance on the liquor permit question, the Gazette noted that Lafferty himself was a prohibitionist, and dismissed his advocacy of local option as inconsistent with his personal beliefs, terming it solely a vote catching technique.[79] Commenting on Lafferty's numerous trips to the north, the Herald noted that, "He knows he has no chance among those who understand politics, so he hies him to the north . . . ."[80]

Because of the great distances to be covered in the election, much of the campaign was centred in Calgary. The most important reason for this was the fact that Calgary was the headquarters of the most important economic industry in the district--ranching. Situated on the CPR mainline, and at the same time a part of the ranching country, Calgary became an important shipping and distributing centre for that industry.[81] The city also served as a distribution point for Alberta's mining interests. Furthermore, farming activity tended to congregate around such important market links as Calgary.[82] Thus, as the most important economic centre in the district, Calgary naturally tended to become the most active point in the political struggle in Alberta. In addition to its position of economic dominance in 1887, Calgary had historically been an important link between the fur trade of the north and distribution centres in the south such as Fort Benton. This made the city a traditional meeting point between north and south.[83]

This meeting of north and south was reflected in the political stance of the Herald. Until mid-January 1887, the Herald supported Hardisty, expressing the independent sentiments of its editor John Innes.[84] After the convention however, Innes was bought out by A.R. Lucas and C.F. Ewer, both strong Conservatives. They gradually edged the Herald's support away from Hardisty once it became apparent that he would not run as a straight Conservative.[85] The fact that Lucas was secretary of the Calgary Association, and was later to be elected president of the district association on January 27 implies that the Herald, which was experiencing financial difficulties at the time, was purchased in a deliberate move to found a strong Conservative organ in Calgary. Lucas and Ewer's move was no doubt also prompted by the fact that Frank Oliver's paper, the Bulletin was urging Alberta Liberals to support Hardisty as an expression of the west's dissatisfaction with Macdonald's administration of the west.[86]

Despite the fact that the prime target of its attacks continued to be Lafferty, the Herald was no longer gentle in its opposition to Hardisty. On the eve of the election, the paper published its strongest denunciation, noting: "Hardisty depends altogether on race prejudice and the sectionalism of the north to elect him."[87] There was no need to convert the southern papers, which had always opposed Hardisty's candidacy on regional and partisan grounds.[88]

But the regional identification which played so great a part in the political attitude of the south was blurred in Calgary. Only on the eve of the election did the Herald introduce any sectional conflict between north and south. Despite this, after the election Lucas still maintained that the biggest factor in Hardisty's rejection by the convention had been the failure of the federal party to ascertain whether Hardisty's candidacy would be acceptable to the rank and file of the party.[89] Rather than regional identification then, it seemed that partyism was the major reason for the Herald's decision to support Davis. For Lucas and the Herald, Hardisty's ultimate sin was not that he was a northerner, but rather that he was an independent, and in this case an independent with Liberal backing.

The speaking campaign began in Calgary with a meeting for Davis on February 15 which the Herald termed a "rousing success."[90] This was quickly followed by a general meeting of all candidates four days later, also in Calgary. Lafferty was present, Hugh Cayley spoke for Davis, while Alexander Begg and Reverend Gaetz spoke for Hardisty. In a burst foolhardiness, Cayley promised Davis' support for the abolition of the CPR monopoly. Gaetz noted the difficulty the Hardisty camp was experiencing drumming up support in the south because of the Conservatives' control of all the major newspapers. At the same time, he stressed very strongly that Hardisty enjoyed the support of the federal Conservatives.[91]

Two weeks later at a meeting held in Macleod for Davis and Lafferty, Davis revealed his program for southern cattle leases. In a partial reversal of his earlier stance he stated that the leases should not be cancelled, but should be thrown open for settlement. He criticized Lafferty's plan for the cancellation of all leases within two years, stating such a scheme was highly impractical and very detrimental to the interests of the ranchers.[92]

At a meeting for Davis and Lafferty in Lethbridge on March 8, four days after the Macleod meeting, Lafferty also modified his stance on the lease question somewhat, stating that only those leases with unfulfilled conditions should be cancelled. Davis, on the other hand reiterated that ranchers needed the lease system to compete successfully with American beef and stressed that the immediate cancellation of the leases would have disastrous consequences for the ranching community.[93]

Lafferty also criticized Davis' party connections, noting that as a Conservative Davis would be compelled to vote Conservative, a fact Davis had never denied. Lafferty also noted that the same type of connection which existed between Hardisty and the Hudson's Bay Company existed between Davis and the I.G. Baker Company. Replying for Davis, C.F.P. Coneybeare, a prominent Lethbridge Conservative lawyer, reiterated the old charge that the Liberals were a parsimonious anti-development party, and answered the specific charge against Baker's connections with Davis by noting that the Company had not laid down any conditions for Davis' candidacy, and in fact had opposed Davis' running in the election. Lafferty closed the meeting with a denunciation of the CPR monopoly.[94]

The following day, a meeting for all candidates was held in Calgary. H. Bleecker spoke for Davis, J. Preston, a party representative from Ontario, spoke for Lafferty, and T.W. Jackson spoke for Hardisty. Jackson and Bleecker seemed to have arrived at a truce between themselves, for both concentrated their attacks on Preston. They accused Lafferty and the Liberal party of having a tight-fisted attitude toward western development, while they stressed the benefits the Conservative administration had bestowed on the west. This combined attack apparently unnerved Preston to such an extent that the Herald reported he responded to the abuse with

> torrents of coarse and brutal abuse of both of these gentlemen. He flourished a role of bills to convey the impression that money would talk on election day.[95]

Three days later on March 9, a meeting was held in Macleod for Hardisty. F.W.G. Haultain made the first of many speeches for the Conservative party, and charged Hardisty with being a mere puppet of the Hudson's Bay Company, and thus no more independent than either Davis or Lafferty, and considerably less honest about it.[96]

The March 9 meeting was the last important political gathering before election day on March 15. The campaign itself had been relatively short, only beginning with the decision of the Calgary convention to support Davis at the end of January.

From the standpoint of the issues of the campaign, the two most important questions had been the CPR monopoly and the lease question. On both of these issues, Davis had taken a rather vague stance. In speaking of the problem of leases, he had merely emphasized that both ranchers' and settlers' rights had to be respected, and had made no more definite proposal than the leases should be thrown open to settlement but not cancellation. Any disputes arising from the conflict between ranchers and settlers he suggested be taken to a royal commission which would be created to look into the whole problem of leases. On the other hand, Lafferty had begun his campaign with a strong statement in favor of the cancellation of leases. This he later modified by providing for the cancellation of leases on which stocking conditions had not been fulfilled. Hardisty made no statement about the lease question whatsoever.

On the CPR monopoly, Davis once again failed to commit himself. He made no mention of it in his platform, and subsequent to that, the only mention of the monopoly was Cayley's rash promise to do away with the monopoly entirely. Unlike Davis, both Lafferty and Hardisty concentrated intensively on the monopoly. Both their platforms included statements opposing the monopoly, and during the course of the campaign, Lafferty denounced the CPR at every opportunity.

Throughout the campaign, it appeared that Hardisty and Davis had actually ceded their relative power bases to each other, and had decided to fight the election on purely regional grounds. Lafferty, as the man in the middle, was the odd man out having neither organization nor support outside Calgary.

The attacks made on Lafferty by the Hardisty camp are rather interesting. In centring their public campaign against Lafferty and the

Liberal party, it seems clear that Hardisty and his followers were attempting to associate themselves as closely as possible with the Conservative party. This tactic was most evident at the March 6 general meeting in Calgary. At this time, Jackson, the Hardisty representative concentrated solely on the differences between the Conservative and Liberal party's policies regarding western development, making no mention of the more important contest between Hardisty and Davis.[97] With north virtually sewn up for Hardisty, it was apparently decided that the only possibility of gaining any southern support was to attach Hardisty as closely as possible to Conservative policy, and emphasize the support Macdonald had given to him.

The 1887 election had resolved itself into a conflict between north and south for political dominance in the district, and the results were exhilarating victory for Davis and the southern Conservatives and a crushing defeat for Hardisty and the north. The final poll gave Davis a victory by a margin of 1,049 to 781 over Hardisty. Lafferty polled 232 votes, not enough to affected the 268 vote majority Davis held over Hardisty.[98]

The election returns in the major towns support the contention that the real issue of the election was not leases or monopolies but a purely regional battle between north and south. In three towns south of Calgary, Davis received an overwhelming majority over Hardisty: 201 votes to 2 in Macleod, 97 to 1 in Pincher Creek, and 187 to 11 in Lethbridge. Conversely, in the four major towns of the north, Hardisty polled solid margins over Davis. In South Edmonton, Hardisty received 55 votes to Davis' 11; in St. Albert, Hardisty received 130 votes to Davis' 21; in Edmonton, he beat Davis by 114 to 11; and in Fort

Saskatchewan, Hardisty won by a vote of 46 to 10.[99]

The total vote for north and south further strengthens the regional thesis. Looking at the aggregate southern vote, Davis received a huge majority over Hardisty, 608 votes to 77. This situation was comparable for Hardisty in the north. Hardisty outpolled Davis by a 3 to 1 margin receiving 609 votes as compared to Davis' 205. The fact that Davis polled a relatively greater vote in the north than Hardisty did in the south was largely due to his earlier acquaintance with the north, and as well due to his extensive campaign in that region.

The kind of campaign waged by Davis in the north can be seen in his victory over Hardisty in Blind Man, a metis community west of Red Deer. During the course of the campaign, Davis had sponsored a dance in Blind Man at which time he had mingled extensively with the metis, and had provided generous refreshments from his ever-present treating stock of whiskey. The Tribune wrote of the dance in retrospect that "whiskey flowed freely, and never did half-breed babies receive better nursing or more kissing in one night than at the dance at Blind Man."[100]

In Calgary, the pivotal point in the district, the vote was closer. Davis polled the greatest number of votes, 174, but he was followed closely by Lafferty with 149, more than half the doctor's total vote. Hardisty finished a respectable third with 95 votes.[101] Two reasons explain the support Hardisty received in the city. First, the early support many high level local Tories gave Hardisty no doubt carried over to election day. Second, much of the effort Hardisty put into his southern campaign was concentrated on Calgary, and with such strong supporters as Begg and Gaetz, he managed to make a respectable showing.

The issues raised throughout the campaign were obviously subordinated to regional concerns. Nothing bears this out more clearly than the comments of both Davis and Hardisty after the election. At his victory celebration, Davis was brutally frank about his reasons for running:

> I was put up by the Conservatives, and they know I am a rank Tory, for the purpose of downing Mr. Hardisty, and I have done so.[102]

Hardisty writing to John Wrigley after the election, was even more specific about the conflict between north and south, commenting that "Lafferty and Davis joined forces to fight against the north."[103]

If Davis was elated by his victory, Hardisty certainly was disillusioned with the whole course of the campaign. Persuaded despite his own reluctance to become a candidate, he had failed miserably. He was obviously no politician, and had no taste for political activities. Throughout the campaign he had remained aloof from the battle. Writing to his brother John two weeks before the election, he had noted disgustedly:

> If I had known that there would have been all this bother about one election, I would have been most careful in accepting the position. It is now only two weeks, when it will be over, there is so much devil dodging about it that I am sick of it, but must remain with it to the last.[104]

The election was apparently a victory for the south and for partisan political activity. It remained to be seen how Davis would represent the interests of the south, and how Macdonald would react to the new western MP's.

FOOTNOTES

[1] D.G. Creighton, John A. Macdonald, vol. 2, The Old Chieftain, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1955), p. 458.

[2] This was especially important to the ranching elite, the dominant economic group in southern Alberta. This group felt the Territorial Council was more disposed to settlers' interests than those of the ranching community. Thus the ranchers looked to Ottawa to protect their vested interests.
David H. Breen, "The Cattle Compact in Southern Alberta," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Calgary, 1966), p. 44.

[3] L.H. Thomas, The Struggle for Responsible Government in the Northwest Territories 1870-97, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 106.

[4] E.H. Oliver, The Prairie Provinces, vol. 19 of Canada and Its Provinces, ed. A. Shortt and A. Doughty, (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook and Company, 1914), p. 214. Oliver noted that partyism in the west arose with large scale immigration from eastern Canada in the early 1880's, and that the political loyalties of the immigrants reflected party affiliation in eastern Canada.

[5] S.A. Williams, "Early Newspapers in Alberta," paper presented to the Amisk-Waskehegan chapter of the Historical Society of Alberta, Edmonton, February 9, 1972.

[6] Macleod Gazette, 12 October 1886.

[7] Ibid., 28 December 1886.

[8] Calgary Tribune, 3 April 1886.

[9] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 261. Thomas notes that the common political attitude in the west was based on "a practical rather than doctrinaire approach . . .."

[10] Calgary Tribune, 7 January 1887.

[11] Lethbridge News, 12 February 1886.

[12] Ibid., 28 May 1886.

[13] Ibid., 9 July 1886.

[14] Calgary Herald, 15 January 1886. No other officers are listed.

[15] Macleod Gazette, 28 December 1886.

[16] Calgary Herald, 17 April 1886.

[17] Lethbridge News, 3 November 1886.

[18] Ibid., 19 January 1887.

[19] Ibid., 26 January 1887.

[20] Ibid. The executive was composed of R. Niven, president; W.D. Whitney, 1st vice-president; M. McKenzie, 2nd vice-president; and E.T. Saunders, secretary.

[21] Macleod Gazette, 28 December 1886. The executive was composed of D.W. Davis, president; C.C. McCaul, 1st vice-president; C. Sharples, 2nd vice-president; and F.W.G. Haultain, secretary. Both Davis and Sharples were ranchers, McCaul was a businessman and Haultain a prominent lawyer.

[22] Ibid., 11 January 1887.

[23] Ibid., 1 February 1887.

[24] See Appendix I for map.

[25] The Baker Company was established in Montana in 1866, and had created branches in Macleod in 1872, Calgary in 1875 and Lethbridge in 1885. In 1888 the company was described as being "the leading establishment (wholesale and retail) in this part of the country." G.H. Ham, The New West, (Winnipeg: Canadian Historical Publishing Company, 1888), p. 129.

[26] P.F. Sharp, Whoop-Up Country: The Canadian-American West 1865-1885, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955), p. 89.

[27] Calgary Herald, 4 February 1887.

[28] Macleod Gazette, 11 January 1887.

[29] Lethbridge News, 28 May 1886.

[30] Macleod Gazette, 11 January 1887.

[31] Lethbridge News, 9 February 1887.

[32] Although the ranching community supported Davis, the Galt Coal Company did not. In fact, Elliot Galt, manager of the Company's operations in Alberta, supported Davis' chief rival--Richard Hardisty. UAR, Richard Hardisty Letterbook 1882-87, Hardisty to Elliot Galt, 8 February 1887.

[33] Hardisty had been chief factor of the Bay Company's post at Edmonton since 1868, and both his father and grandfather had been chief factors in their time. Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1889.

[34] Sharp, op. cit., p. 133.

[35] Calgary Tribune, 25 February 1887.

[36] PAC, John A. Macdonald Papers, W.B. Scarth to Macdonald, 4 February 1887. Macdonald had noted his reply to Scarth at the bottom of the telegram.

[37] Hardisty Papers, Hardisty to Elliot Galt, 8 February 1887.

[38] Ibid., Hardisty to John Wrigley, 17 November 1886.

[39] Ibid. Oliver's support of Hardisty seems to have been based on two considerations. First, Oliver, like Wood was an early supporter of the non-partisan movement in politics, and partly for this reason Hardisty received his support. The second, and perhaps the most important reason was that "Liberal organization was simply not strong enough to elect its candidate in the west because it lacked a strong alternative Northwest policy with which to confront the Conservatives." W.S. Waddell, "The Honorable Frank Oliver," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1950), p. 153.

[40] The reasons for Hardisty's independence are not quite clear. There is some evidence to support the idea that his stance was dictated to him by the Bay Company who were unwilling to see a prominent employee of the Company become involved in politics in a partisan way. A telegram emerged during the campaign purportedly from John Wrigley, Commissioner of the HBC in Winnipeg, to Hardisty. The text of the telegram read: "You may become a candidate if you are ensured of a large majority. If so, it must be publicly made clear that you are an Independent and are not attached to either political party." (Macleod Gazette, 1 March 1887.) The Hardisty papers themselves support this contention, as Hardisty only decided to enter the campaign following the receipt of a telegram from Wrigley on November 2, 1886. Hardisty papers, Hardisty to Wrigley, 10 November 1886.

[41] Lethbridge News, 28 May 1886.

[42] David H. Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier 1875-1922," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), p. 86. Breen notes, "By virtue of their political and economic control and coupled with their intimate metropolitan connections, the cattlemen, by 1886, had assumed the status of a regional elite."

[43] Breen, "The Cattle Compact," p. 44.

[44] Lethbridge News, 9 February 1887.

[45] Ibid., 28 January 1887.

[46] Macleod Gazette, 25 January 1887.

[47] Hardisty papers, Hardisty to John Wrigley, 19 January 1887.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Macdonald papers, W.B. Scarth to Macdonald, 20 January 1887.

[50] Hardisty papers, J.G. Kinnaird to G. Thompson, 25 January 1887.

[51] *Ibid.*, Hardisty to John Wrigley, 19 January 1887.

[52] *Calgary Tribune*, 21 January 1887.

[53] *Macleod Gazette*, 8 February 1887.

[54] *Ibid.* Delegates to the Calgary convention:
Calgary--12
Macleod--8
Lethbridge--6
Pincher Creek--6
Pine Creek--2
High River--2
Sheep Creek--2
Banff--2

[55] *Ibid.*

[56] Hardisty papers, C. Watson to L. Gaetz, 25 January 1887; Macdonald papers, Thomas White to Macdonald, 4 March 1887; *Ibid.*, Donald Smith to Macdonald, 16 February 1887.

[57] Hardisty papers, C. Watson to L. Gaetz, 25 January 1887.

[58] Macdonald papers, Donald Smith to Macdonald, 16 February 1887.

[59] *Ibid.*, Thomas White to Macdonald, 8 March 1887.

[60] *Ibid.*, Donald Smith to Macdonald, 4 February 1887. The idea that Macdonald refused to interfere in the nomination procedures of local associations is further strengthened by G.A. Friesen in his "Studies in the Development of Western Canadian Regional Consciousness 1870-1925," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Toronto, 1973), p. 294. He states that although the political organization of the west was paternal and centralized, Macdonald "insisted on local independence in the selection of candidates . . .."

[61] *Ibid.*, C.E.D. Wood to Macdonald, 6 March 1887.

[62] *Macleod Gazette*, 1 March 1887.

[63] *Calgary Tribune*, 25 February 1887.

[64] Hardisty papers, J.G. Kinnaird to G. Thompson, 25 January 1887.

[65] *Calgary Tribune*, 18 February 1887.

[66] W.S. Waddell, *op. cit.*, p. 150. Waddell further notes that because the federal elections in the rest of Canada were to be held on February 22, while the Territorial election was slated for March 15, there was a much greater incentive to vote for the Conservatives.

[67] Calgary Herald, 11 March 1887.

[68] Macleod Gazette, 22 February 1887.

[69] Ibid., 15 March 1887.

[70] Calgary Tribune, 18 March 1887.

[71] Hardisty papers, J.G. Kinnaird to G. Thompson, 16 February 1887.

[72] Lethbridge News, 30 March 1887.

[73] Ibid., 23 February 1887.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Breen, "The Canadian West," p. 105. As early as April 1885, an Alberta Settlers' Rights Association had been formed to urge that all land suitable for agricultural purposes be removed from the leases and thrown open to settlement.

[76] Breen, "The Cattle Compact," p. 63.

[77] Lethbridge News, 23 February 1887.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Macleod Gazette, 8 March 1887.

[80] Calgary Herald, 4 March 1887.

[81] L.G. Thomas, "The Rancher and the City: Calgary and the Cattlemen, 1887-1914," TRSC, vol. 4, series 4, June 1968, p. 207.

[82] Dorothy Diller, "The Early Economic Development of Alberta", (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1923), p. 125-26.

[83] M.L. Foran, "The Birth and Expansion of Calgary 1875-1905," paper presented to the Urban History Conference, University of Winnipeg, October, 1975.

[84] C.A. Haydon, "The Romance of the Calgary Herald," in The Story of the Press, (Battleford: Canadian Northwest Historical Publications, vol. 1, no. 4, part 1, 1928), p. 87.

[85] Calgary Herald, 15 January 1887.

[86] Ibid., 18 February 1887.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Lethbridge News, 8 December 1886; Macleod Gazette, 22 February 1887. Wood's campaign against Hardisty was the most bitter of any of

the three major Conservative papers. In February Wood noted that, as an HBC man, Hardisty represented a company whose policy was "to prevent the development of the Territories and to further the bondage of the half-breeds."

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[89] Calgary Herald, 18 March 1887.

[90] Ibid., 18 February 1887.

[91] Calgary Tribune, 25 February 1887.

[92] Macleod Gazette, 8 March 1887.

[93] Lethbridge News, 9 March 1887.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Calgary Herald, 11 March 1887.

[96] Macleod Gazette, 15 March 1887.

[97] Calgary Herald, 11 March 1887.

[98] Lethbridge News, 30 March 1887.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Calgary Tribune, 11 March 1887.

[101] Lethbridge News, 30 March 1887.

[102] Calgary Herald, 1 April 1887.

[103] Hardisty papers, Hardisty to John Wrigley, 28 March 1887.

[104] Ibid., Hardisty to Joseph Hardisty, 11 March 1887.

CHAPTER II

1887 TO 1891
SLOW STEADY GROWTH

Although Hardisty had been decisively defeated by Davis, Hardisty's political career was by no means at an end. He still retained many friends in Ottawa. Both Donald Smith and Thomas White were supporters, and Macdonald himself had backed him officially during the campaign. As a reward for running, Hardisty was appointed to the Senate early in January 1888.[1]

In Alberta, press reaction was predictable in its opposition to Hardisty's senatorship.[2] As early as June 1887, the News noted his probable appointment and dismissed him as a "worn out political hack."[3] C.E.D. Wood was somewhat gentler in his criticism, but no less opposed to Hardisty's elevation to the Senate. He wrote: "It is scarcely fair to now foist him onto a people who have already declared that they do not want him."[4]

When the actual appointment was made, the News burst out into indignant protests. E.T. Saunders predicted Hardisty would be merely a "tool" of the Hudson's Bay Company. The only saving grace in the whole affair was the fact that the Senate was a virtually powerless body in the eyes of most westerners. Because the Senate was "emasculated" Saunders noted with some relief that the south had "little to fear from Hardisty."[5]

Indignation over Hardisty's appointment was not the only problem plaguing Alberta Conservatives in 1887. The most important question decided during the year was control of patronage, and fortunately for the Conservative party, this took place out of the public's eye.

Not a strong man personally, Davis had been elected to serve the interests of the district largely in the name of the ranching industry. One of the expectations of that industry, and indeed of all Alberta Conservatives, was that loyal party members would be rewarded with government contracts and civil service positions for their efforts on Davis' behalf. Davis had stressed this very point in his 1887 platform, promising to press for all Territorial appointments being made locally. This was only natural, he had political dues to pay, and patronage was an effective way of discharging them.

The federal party was less aware of Davis' obligations however. They themselves had political dues on a much larger scale than Davis, and what better method of payment than civil service appointments in the west?

When it became apparent that the federal party was using western appointments to reward eastern party members, there was a near revolt among district Conservatives in Alberta. A.R. Lucas, president of the district association and secretary of the Calgary Association as well, fired off an angry letter to Davis setting out the grievances of Alberta Conservatives very clearly. He objected particularly to the appointment of one Peter King as sheriff of northern Alberta. He demanded instead that King be replaced with J.A. McMillan, a loyal party supporter and fund raiser. He further complained that of the seven local appointments in Alberta, none were among those recommended by the party, and only one was a local man.[6]

He stressed that Conservatives in Alberta had remained loyal to the federal party even to the point of supporting the National Policy and disallowance, neither of which was in the best interests of the west. That such loyalty did not receive its just rewards was outrageous. It was only with the greatest difficulty that Lucas had prevented a general meeting of Alberta Conservatives from expressing their public disapproval with the Macdonald government. He concluded by threatening:

> If they [Macdonald and White] answer evasively or negatively . . . it will result in the disbandment and death of the Conservative party in Alberta.[7]

Despite the potential revolt of the district association, Davis was markedly unsympathetic to Lucas' demands. He merely forwarded the letter to White with a note requesting an official reply and the comment "it matters little to me what they are, but would like to have this to send these grumblers."[8] White was even less sympathetic than Davis. In his reply he accused the district association of overstepping itself in asking for local control of patronage, tersely concluding, "the government must alone be responsible for patronage."[9] The subsequent failure of the association to carry out their threatened revolt indicates the problem was less serious than Lucas had made it out to be.

Excepting his coolness to the demands of the district association regarding patronage, Davis was fairly attentive to the needs of the district during his initial years in parliament. Though not a great speaker, he did manage to pass successfully a bill for the incorporation of the Galts' Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company which had applied for a charter to build a rail line from Lethbridge to the lucrative coal markets of Montana.[10] He also urged the Minister of Public Works, Sir Hector Langevin, to open for settlement all grazing leases left unstocked or unoccupied, and pressed for the establishment of a Police post in Edmonton.[11] Such attention to district needs was praised by southern newspapers, but like Oliver Twist, the south continually wanted more. In this light, easily the most contentious issue was the need for a bridge across the Old Man River at Lethbridge.[12]

The issue of the bridge aside, the most important question in the district during the first few years of federal representation was Manitoba's attack on the CPR rail monopoly. Federal disallowance of rail charters had become a regular occurrence in Manitoba since 1880, and the issue had come to parliament several times. In 1887, discontent with this policy was widespread enough to bring it before the House again.[13]

Although the question at hand dealt solely with Manitoba's grievances with the CPR, many westerners outside the province looked on the possibility of the abolition of the monopoly clause in Manitoba with hope. Any chink in the armor covering the clause would make Territories' battle with the CPR over the same issue all the easier.

The Galt Company especially suffered from the effect of the monopoly. The projected rail line to Montana would be seriously jeopardized if disallowance was upheld in Manitoba. Davis was not unaware of the concern of the Galt Company, but his loyalty to both the ranching industry which supported the policy and to the government itself made it inevitable that he would vote against the motion.[14]

His actions brought forth the regret of both the News and the Gazette, but he was not openly criticized for his vote. Instead the federal government and the CPR came in for the brunt of the condemnation from the south.[15] At any rate, the monopoly clause and disallowance were a source of irritation for only a short while, as the clause itself was cancelled the following year.[16]

The unanimity which the southern press had expressed in their opposition to the monopoly clause was not carried into other areas. In fact, the period between 1887 and 1891 witnessed a fierce rivalry among the three principal towns of the south for commercial dominance. Calgary had already achieved the pre-eminent economic position by the latter half of the 1880's, but between Macleod and Lethbridge an intense kind of little metropolitan struggle was waged.

It began almost immediately after the federal election with the nominations for the Territorial Council in the Macleod district which included Lethbridge. Although the creation of the Territorial Assembly and a new election was only a year away, a local campaign had been necessitated by the resignation from the Council of Lord Boyle, the colorful rancher-peer from Pincher Creek.[17] Lethbridge nominated local Conservative lawyer C.F.P. Coneybeare in August, claiming that both Pincher Creek and Macleod had already had representatives in the persons of Boyle and Davis respectively.[18] Nevertheless, Macleod nominated their own candidate, the future Territorial Premier F.W.G. Haultain.[19] On receipt of the news of Haultain's nomination, Saunders was furious, charging Macleod with failing to consult either Lethbridge or Pincher Creek.[20]

Wood's reply to Saunders vividly demonstrates the fierceness of the rivalry between the two towns:

> The ambitious little town [Lethbridge] not only wants to run the whole district, but wants to do it alone. The interests of the western districts are in danger, and the danger can only be averted by every elector going to the various polling places and thus rolling up the vote for Mr. Haultain.[21]

Of course, Haultain won the election easily and went on to a lengthy and distinguished career in Territorial politics, but disputes between the two towns continued. They centred, for the most part on the location of such public buildings as post offices and land registries. Lethbridge, favored with a rail line and a more diversified economic base, ultimately assumed a dominant role in the southwest, and came to be regarded as the distribution and marketing centre for that area.[22] This did not dull the rivalry however and Macleod's desperate search for rail links to wider markets lent a critical and at times independent note to the Conservatism of the Gazette and to Macleod Conservatives in general.[23]

Haultain's victory over Coneybeare was savored only briefly. The Territorial Council was abolished in 1888 and replaced by an Assembly. The prospect of a wholly elective legislature raised several problems for Alberta Conservatives and western politicians in general. One of the most important of these was the issue of the introduction of party lines into the new Assembly.

Certainly, since the federal election, the advocates of independent politics had frequently urged such a policy on the Territories. And, for the most part, the western press supported the idea of a non-partisan Assembly. Saunders had objected to the introduction of party politics into the Northwest Council election in April 1887, but at the same time he was pessimistic about the prospect of keeping local elections free from partyism.[24]

Wood had expressed the same sentiment even earlier. Responding to a suggestion that a "Northwest First" party be formed in the Territories, he gloomily prophesied:

> We have too many men who have suddenly developed into strong party men to make such a thing possible now.[25]

Like Saunders, Wood believed that the strong party lines generated during the 1887 election would inevitably spill over into Territorial politics.

As the partisan fervor of the election faded away however, opinion seems to have changed. In August 1887, Saunders wrote that partyism seemed to be giving way to a more independent spirit in the Territories.[26] The Herald, like its southern counterparts also supported independent politics. Following the Territorial election, the Herald sternly admonished its two elected representatives to "use their influence towards the advancement of the country . . ., rather than playing at politics or being obstructive."[27]

The reasons for this change in attitude are not as clear as they might be. L.H. Thomas does provide one possible answer for the triumph of non-partisan politics in the Assembly. He stresses that the prevalent attitude and practice among those federal administrators concerned with the west was a kind of little imperialism. The product of this attitude was "vigorous self-assertion combined with respect for the substantial benefits of federal authority."[28] Territorial politics certainly reflected this. The Assembly came to be a sounding board for the needs and grievances of the west, yet it was only at the federal level that the desired policies could be implemented. Thus the introduction of partisan politics into Territorial elections would have served only to disunite and disorganize the common voice demanding change, while it could not have materially affected the shaping of policy.

A second explanation stems from the reaction of the southern press to the government's handling of the west during the period between the federal and Territorial elections. Both Saunders and Wood were less than enthusiastic about the benefits accruing to Alberta from the election of a government member. They continually roasted the government for its failure to build bridges, establish local branches of federal government offices and increase the Territorial representation for southern Alberta. At one point, Saunders went so far as to say that Conservatism was "being rapidly weakened by splits caused by discontent at the hands of the government . . .."[29] And Wood, whose Conservatism had always been of the independent variety, criticized the protective tariff and flirted with Commercial Union.[30]

Davis himself was not blamed for the government's lack of concern with the south, but the News went out of its way to criticize Hardisty. The announcement in May 1888 that Alberta was to get only six members in the new Territorial Assembly, and the south only three of these, prompted Saunders to revive the old rivalry between north and south. The fact that the south did not get a fourth member he attributed directly to the "influence and exertions of Mr. Hardisty."[31]

The southern press contended that the indifference of the federal government to western needs was the direct result of political interests superceding those of the people. This certainly did nothing to smooth the way for the introduction of party politics into the

Assembly. Judging from the federal example, it was felt that little could be expected from a Territorial Assembly operating along party lines.[32]

Hardisty's indifference and hostility towards the south were not long a source of irritation. On October 2, 1889, he was killed falling from a wagon at Broadview Saskatchewan while on his way to Winnipeg.[33] His passing was lamented sincerely, but a successor quickly sought. Among those considered for the position were Davis, James Lougheed, R.G. Brett, Rev. Gaetz and James Reilly; Prime Minister Macdonald finally settled on Lougheed.[34]

His appointment was warmly welcomed in the south. Lougheed had arrived in Calgary in 1883, opening a law office in partnership with Peter McCarthy and J. McCarter. The following year he had married the eldest daughter of Richard Hardisty's brother, William, making him Hardisty's nephew, and giving rise to speculation in some quarters that he had married the young lady for her money.[35] The gossip is unsubstantiated, but it is true Lougheed was a true western entrepreneur with business interests ranging from land speculation to the purchase, along with D.W. Davis and others, of a part of the Herald in 1889.[36] Politically he was Conservative, although his support of Hardisty in 1887 and his occasional brushes with non-partisan movements were to make him suspect in the eyes of some southern Conservatives by 1896.[37]

In 1888, the year before Hardisty's death, attention focussed on the Territorial election slated for June. There were six seats at stake in Alberta. In Calgary, the previous Territorial Councillor H.S. Cayley stood along with John Lineham and James Reilly. In Edmonton, Dr. H.C. Wilson and Frank Oliver, both former Councillors, ran as did

H.T. Cunningham. F.W.G. Haultain stood alone in Macleod, Lethbridge having apparently become reconciled to him, while R.G. Brett was opposed by A. Brealy in Red Deer.[38] Of the candidates, only one, Oliver, was a Liberal, while all the Calgary candidates and both Haultain and Brett had been and were prominent members of local Conservative executives.[39] Had the election been fought along party lines it was obvious Alberta, at least, would have returned an overwhelming Conservative majority.

As it was however, the election generated little interest. Paradoxically, while railing against the evils of partyism, Saunders blamed the turgidity of the campaign squarely on the lack of a partisan atmosphere.[40] By and large Saunders was right, for without partyism there was little to make the contest exciting. The platforms of the candidates were almost uniform in their demands for increased federal expenditures in the west. The results of the election were also predictable, Haultain was elected in Macleod, Brett in Red Deer, Cayley and Lineham in Calgary, and Oliver and Wilson in Edmonton.[41]

When the Assembly convened in the fall of 1888, one of the most important questions dealt with was the permit system and prohibition. This system had been in force since 1875, and was designed to protect the Indians from exploitation by unscrupulous white traders. It prohibited the importation or manufacture of all liquor without the written permission of the Lieutenant-Governor.[42] Initially it had worked well, but with the expanding white population problems had arisen. It was physically impossible for the Lieutenant-Governor to issue permits to all those wishing them, and equally difficult to enforce prohibition. By the late 1880's the law was openly flouted by much of the male population. Assistant Commissioner Herchmer of the Northwest Mounted

Police wrote in 1888,

> The liquor law is not working at all satisfactorily, and is no doubt being evaded, and would be even if there were five times as many police as there are.[43]

To cope with the problem, the Assembly, in its first session, passed a resolution asking the federal government for the power to legislate on the liquor question. This power was not given until 1891, at which time the Assembly finally abolished the permit system and introduced the licensing of liquor outlets.[44]

All three Conservative papers in the district were uniformly opposed to the permit system and in favor of local option and some type of licensing procedure. On the more touchy problem of prohibition, there was also general agreement that men would drink whether it was legal or not, and therefore strict regulation was preferable to prohibition.[45]

At the federal level, Davis responded to the 1888 Assembly's resolution with statements in the Commons favoring a Territorial plebiscite on prohibition and the placing of the regulation of the liquor question in the hands of the Assembly.[46] The plebiscite was not introduced, but as previously mentioned, control of liquor legislation was delegated to the Assembly in 1891.

The years 1889 to 1891 were characterized by dissension in the Territorial Assembly. The Haultain Advisory Council resigned in October of 1889 following the refusal of Lieutenant-Governor Royal to consult the Council on Territorial expenditures, discontinuing a practice which he had inadvertently begun the previous year. Haultain used this issue to force a confrontation with the government over the issue of responsible government, but his actions were somewhat premature.[47]

Royal acted quickly to forestall any halt in the business of the Assembly by appointing a Council of R.G. Brett, D.F. Jelly and B.P. Richardson. These men represented a group of moderates in the Assembly who were unwilling to create a confrontation with Royal, preferring instead a gradual movement towards responsible government.[48] The Brett Council continued to function until the end of the Assembly's three year term despite being ostracized by the majority of the Assembly which was led by Haultain.

This disruptive period was of significance to the Conservative party in Alberta because of the divided loyalties the whole problem created. Lethbridge and Macleod were vehement supporters of Haultain. Saunders felt the Brett Council had sacrificed the interests of the west in order to assume office.[49] Wood was also quick to cast Brett in the role of the opportunistic villain of the piece whose actions were jeopardizing the interests of the citizens of the Northwest.[50] Both editors supported Haultain's policy of vigorously confronting Ottawa with the needs of the west. They believed the Brett Council would merely lie back and allow the federal government to proceed slowly along the path of constitutional evolution.

On the other hand, this opinion of the Brett Council was not held by the Herald. A strong Conservative supporter, the Herald was not about to allow the Lieutenant-Governor and Brett to bear the brunt of the criticism for the disruption of the Assembly. Editor Wesley Orr damned both Haultain and Calgary member Hugh Cayley who supported Haultain's boycott of the Brett Council, noting their actions showed "plainly the contempt in which they hold the rights of the electors," and stressed, "Such actions can only lead the east to refuse larger powers to the

Northwest legislature."[51]

The enmity generated between the Herald and the southern papers over Haultain's confrontation with Royal periodically resurfaced and remained a major bone of contention long after the incident was officially ended.

1891 was in many ways a pivotal year for Alberta and the west. A Territorial election was held which finally broke the deadlock between the Assembly and the Lieutenant-Governor; amendments to the Northwest Territories Act were passed in the Commons, moving the west closer to the attainment of responsible government; and a federal election was called in which the record of the Conservative government in the development of the Territories was assessed.

The records of the census division of the Department of the Interior indicate that Alberta had grown substantially since its last census in 1885. The population of the Macleod census division had increased from 4,450 to 7,203 in 1891, that of the Calgary division from 5,407 to 11, 199, and Edmonton and district had grown from 5,616 to 6,875. The total population of the district had grown from 15,537 to 25,277, but the south had a much higher growth rate than the north, and held over 70% of the populace.[52]

Another index of Alberta's growth was the construction of railways in the district. Both the Galt railway to the US border and the Calgary and Edmonton line had been constructed, the extension of the C. and E. through Macleod was imminent, and a line from Lethbridge through the Crowsnest Pass to the Kootenays was planned.

Despite this rapid and extensive development, the need for even more rapid development was the central focus of the 1891 federal election.

Surprisingly, the tariff which had been the source of much western outcry from 1887 to 1891 was not an important election issue. Party lines, which had slackened greatly during the Territorial election, once again became firm, and Wood and Saunders who had been very critical of the tariff found themselves having to do some particularly vigorous back-peddling on the issue. Saunders who had complained in 1889 that "the high tariff discriminates most unfairly against us . . .,"[53] enthusiastically extolled the merits of Macdonald Conservatism in 1891.[54] Wood of course had been the most independent of the two, but even he swallowed his pride and came out strongly in favor of Davis in February 1891.[55] Only the Herald, which was by no small coincidence the strongest Conservative supporter in the district, had remained steadfast in its approval of all aspects of government policy.

Although the election of 1891 was not an exciting affair, for Alberta Conservatives it was notable in that they managed to select a candidate without the internal dissension which had plagued them in 1887. Davis was accepted as the government's candidate and unanimously endorsed at a special meeting of prominent Alberta Conservatives held in Calgary in February. Although two other candidates; Dr. H.C. Wilson from Edmonton and Dr. Brett from Banff were proposed, both men withdrew in favor of Davis who received particularly strong support from the south, and from Calgary Association president John Lineham, and vice-president James Lougheed.[56]

Understandably, the south was gleeful at this easy acceptance of Davis. Saunders wrote happily in February that Davis was "the recognized Government candidate, and in voting for him, the electors will be supporting the Government of Sir John Macdonald and the party of progress and development."[57]

Unlike the first federal election, the party was very well prepared for the 1891 contest. Davis, as the incumbent, was running under a natural advantage against whoever chose to contest the election. No strong candidate emerged in the north to split the electorate, and there was little behind the scenes manoevering the local associations. It seemed the painful lessons of 1887 had been well-learned.

In terms of personnel, the various Conservative associations remained relatively unchanged from 1887. In Calgary, president of the local association John Lineham and vice-president Senator Lougheed headed up the Davis supporters. Included among these were Hugh Cayley, A.R. Lucas and Henry Bleecker, all of whom had worked for Davis in 1887. In Macleod, Haultain led the Davis organization as did John Herron and G.C. Ives in Pincher Creek, all veterans of the 1887 campaign.[58]

Only in Lethbridge had there been any significant changes in the organization of the party. The new element was the Galt Coal Company. Although the Company had been nominally a supporter of Hardisty in 1887, it had refrained from taking an active part in the election. By 1891, however, the main reason for its opposition to Davis--his support of the CPR monopoly--had been removed, and the Company jumped vigorously into the campaign.

The composition of Davis' central committee in Lethbridge gives an indication of the degree of the Company's involvement in his campaign. It included such early Davis supporters as H. Bently and C.F.P. Coneybeare, but added James Kearn, manager of the milling and lumber division of the Company, C.A. Magrath, the Company's land and irrigation manager, and William Stafford, manager of the Galt mine itself.[59]

In addition to this physical presence, the Company contributed $5,000 towards Davis' campaign in Alberta. Alexander Galt went so far as to offer himself as a candidate in Davis' place, but because of ill health and his age later withdrew the offer.[60]

The north was little heard from throughout the campaign, nor was it prominent in Conservative organization. Its population was considerably less than half that of the south, and no official Conservative association existed as yet in Edmonton. As the contest became primarily southern in character, little interest was generated in the election. In fact, the north was present in district organization only in the short-lived attempt to nominate Dr. Wilson in Calgary. Besides Wilson, the only other prominent force in Conservative circles in the north was the Reverent Gaetz. Gaetz had supported Hardisty in 1887, but in view of Davis' role in the construction of the C. and E., he swung his support over to Davis.[61]

The federal organization stayed well out of the election. They had been badly embarrassed by the course of events in Calgary in 1887, and did not wish to risk sanctioning any candidate other than the official choice of Alberta Conservatives. Thus, when Donald Smith forwarded a telegram to Macdonald from a number of Edmonton Conservatives requesting that the Prime Minister give his official support to Wilson, Macdonald demurred.[62] He waited until the Calgary meeting had endorsed Davis, and then informed Smith that Davis was the official government candidate.[63]

Facing Davis was James Reilly who was nominated on February 17 by a group of independent Conservatives and certain Liberals headed by I.S. Freese, A.L. Cameron and the future provincial premier, A.L. Sifton.[64]

Reilly was the owner of the Royal Hotel in Calgary, and had been involved in local and district politics since his arrival in Calgary in 1884.[65] He had been mayor of the town in 1886, and had just been re-elected for a second term in January, beating out Dr. Lafferty, the former Liberal candidate for Parliament.[66] Although Reilly was prominent in the Calgary Conservative Association, he had political motives for opposing Davis. His Conservatism was of an independent variety, and in fact he had opposed Davis and supported Hardisty in the 1887 Calgary convention. As well, his simmering dispute with Davis and Lougheed over the location of the new Calgary post office lent more material ends to his decision to run.[67]

The date for the election was set for March 5, with nominations to end on February 26. Unlike the election of 1887, the federal election in the east was also held on the same date.

The campaign began, as it had in 1887, with the publication of the platforms of the two candidates in early February. Once again, Davis stood as a straight Conservative, stressing his connection with the Conservative party, and above all with Macdonald. His platform listed his several achievements in the interests of the district, which included the construction of the C. and E. railway and the provision of various local services. He promised even further expenditures in the future, and came out strongly in favor of the extension of the C. and E. to the border and of the Galt railway to the Kootenays. His stand on the issue of immediate provincial status for Alberta was rather more vague. He supported the move, but only when territorial revenues were high enough to avoid the necessity of resorting to direct taxation for revenue.[68]

Reilly's platform was much more extensive. He stressed his independence from the Conservative party, and noted that

> when Conservative policy or expediency clashes with the interests of Alberta, I will ever be found "staying" with the interests of the people of my district.[69]

Much of the remainder of his platform was similar to Davis', but he did mention his support for local control of the liquor question and his opposition to the permit system and prohibition, a stand not inconsistent with his position as a hotel owner. With respect to the lease question, he promised to support the interests of the settlers over "foreign lease-holding companies." Unlike Davis, he favored the immediate grant of provincial status for Alberta with the aid of federal subsidies.

Inclusion of the issue of provincial status in the campaign was a response to its growing popularity in the district. In October of 1890, a meeting of prominent Calgary Liberals and Conservatives, including James Lougheed, Dr. Lafferty, A.L. Bannerman, A.R. Lucas and Hugh Cayley, had proposed that a district convention be held to support the erection of Alberta into a province.[70] Basically, this group felt that the ranching country of Alberta and West Assiniboia was different from the agricultural area of East Assiniboia, and should thus be separated from the east. A less elevated, but undoubtedly prominent motive behind the provincial status movement was Calgary's desire to become capital of such a new province. While the move was heartily applauded by the Tribune, the Gazette and the Herald, it was opposed by the News on the grounds that the district was not sufficiently populous to support such a development, contending that the question of responsible government should be decided first.[71]

At Ottawa, both Davis and Lougheed had been somewhat less enthusiastic about the move than they were on the hustings. Davis had always advocated a gradual approach to provincial status for any part of the Territories, supporting extension of Territorial powers only on the basis of the need to deal with specific problems as in the case of the liquor question.[72] Lougheed was even more specific than Davis about the need for a gradual approach to provincial powers. In early January of 1890, he had said in a speech in the Senate:

> the people of the Territories have expressed themselves as rather contrary to the introduction of an elaborate system of government, but require a rather more extended measure of responsible government than they at present enjoy.[73]

The issue became important enough to warrant the attention of both candidates largely through the exertions of the Herald.[74] In September of 1890, it began to advocate separate status for Alberta. The chief motivation behind its campaign seems to have been a desire to see Calgary established as the new capital of an autonomous Alberta. With the support of the Herald at stake, both candidates were obliged to publicly support provincial status, but Davis' part ownership of the paper made it inevitable its support would lie with him.

Even this question was not sufficient to stir either the interest of the press or the electorate, however. The Tribune perhaps best expressed the spirit and tenor of the campaign when it complained:

> They [the electors] find themselves obliged to choose between two evils, and they are unable to say which is the least.[75]

Possibly the only interesting issue of the election, at least in the south, was the Galts' intervention in the campaign and the resultant pressure exerted on their miners to vote for Davis. In late February, Saunders received and published a telegram from one A.A. Vice, purportedly chairman of the miners' committee, expressing support for

Davis and denying rumors that the miners favored Reilly.[76] The telegram was quickly followed by general meeting of Lethbridge miners at which time William Stafford, mine manager, "advised the miners in their own interests and in the interests of the town . . . to record their vote for Davis."[77] This apparent support for Davis on the part of both miners and mine management was challenged by a second telegram from M. McKenzie, secretary of the Galt Miners' Association, denying the existence of Vice and his committee, and declaring his support for Reilly.[78]

Saunders responded to this dispute by accusing Reilly of attempting to stir up class disputes "where none had existed before,"[79] but the election results bear up the fact that Reilly had indeed generated a great deal of support in Lethbridge. He polled 103 votes compared to Davis' 277. This was easily Reilly's best showing in the south, and the News attributed it specifically to his promise of legislation governing the working conditions in the mines.[80]

Another important question in the south centred around Macleod's demand that the C. and E.'s southern extension be routed into the town. Macleod's lack of rail facilities made her desperate for transportation links to outside markets, and it was not until Davis solemnly promised that the C. and E. would not bypass the town that he received the official endorsation of the Gazette.[81]

The result of the election was predictable. Davis defeated Reilly by over 1,800 votes, polling 2,742 ballots compared to Reilly's 935. Of 41 polling stations in the district, Reilly won only two; one in the south, and one in Red Deer. Even the north gave Davis a strong vote of confidence, which seemed largely the result of the construction of the C. and E., and the promise of future rail extension. Perhaps the greatest surprise of the election was the fact that Davis outpolled Reilly by 414 to 214 votes in Calgary.[82]

Despite his being mayor of the town and a long-time resident, the Herald opposed Reilly outright, while the Tribune supported him only reluctantly. Apart from its solid Conservatism, the Herald's opposition was undoubtedly due in large part to the fact that Davis, along with several others, had purchased the financially troubled paper in July of 1889.[83] The Tribune was lukewarm partially because he had defeated the paper's own choice for mayor, the Liberal Dr. Lafferty.[84]

Reilly was not overly gracious in defeat, blaming

> the hired group of bummers who surrounded most of the polls from Pincher Creek to Edmonton to browbeat and bulldoze those who came to support me.[85]

His accusations were not unfounded. Elections in the west at this time were somewhat less than civilized, and it is likely Davis used whatever means he could to gain an edge over his opponent.[86] Prominent Conservative Wesley Orr, writing to his brother immediately after the election noted he had never seen so much whiskey or money used in a local election before.[87] Despite his own protests of innocence, Reilly was not untainted by the odor of questionable election tactics either. Following the election, the News reported that Reilly and his supporters had challenged all Northwest Mounted Police voters on principle, and had also forced 80 voters to take the bribery oath.[88] Saunders felt this intimidation tactic accounted for the relatively small turnout in Lethbridge.[89]

1891 marked the close of an era for the Conservative party. The death of Macdonald left the party leaderless and contributed greatly to the decline of Conservative strength in Alberta, for it was above all

Macdonald, and not the Conservative party, that western voters identified with. Writing to his father in 1890, Hugh John Macdonald had noted the Prime Minister's voter appeal, and the dilemma the party would face after his death:

> There is practically no Conservative party in Canada at the present time. There is a very strong Sir John A. Party, but the members of which it is composed acknowledge allegiance to none of your colleagues, and I fear a process of rapid disintegration will set in when anyone else attempts to take command.[90]

The years of strength for the Conservative party in Alberta were over. The next five years witnessed a slow decline in the strength of the party, culminating in the 1896 election when it was again rent by the internal dissension which had almost destroyed it in 1887.

FOOTNOTES

[1] L.H. Thomas, The Struggle for Responsible Government in the Northwest Territories 1870-97, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 136. Senate representation had been provided for in 1887. The west was given two seats in the Senate, the other position being filled by W.D. Perley who resigned his seat as MP for East Assiniboia.

[2] Large gaps exist in the Calgary Weekly Herald between 1888 and 1897. These include the election years of 1891 and 1896. This has resulted in a more extensive reliance on the two remaining Conservative papers in the district, the Lethbridge News and the Macleod Gazette, up to 1894. After that date a fourth Conservative paper, the Edmonton News, was established, and this source has also been consulted.

[3] Lethbridge News, 8 July 1887.

[4] Macleod Gazette, 26 July 1887.

[5] Lethbridge News, 5 January 1888.

[6] PAC, John A. Macdonald papers, A.R. Lucas to D.W. Davis, 8 June 1887.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid., D.W. Davis to Thomas White, 8 June 1887.

[9] Ibid., Thomas White to D.W. Davis, 16 June 1887. Davis adhered to White's general directive on patronage, but he was not entirely unaware of the use and importance of patronage when it was of personal benefit to him or to the interests he represented. Thus in June of 1888, he pressed the government to give I.G. Baker the contract to supply cattle to the Piegan and Blackfoot reserves over the T.C. Power Company, based on the rather specious argument that Power was an American Company. (Ibid., Davis to Macdonald, 9 June 1888.) During the election of 1891 he also urged that the claims of J.R. Costigan, an Edmonton supporter in the 1887 election, against the government be settled as it was worth 40 votes. (Ibid., Davis to Macdonald, 14 February 1891.)

[10] A.A. den Otter, "Alexander Galt and the Northwest: A Study in Frontier Entrepreneurialism," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1974), p. 182. den Otter points out that Davis was a Director of the Company at this time.

[11] Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1888, p. 454, 825, 965.

[12] The tortuous history of the bridge has all the aspects of a tragi-comedy. From 1887 to 1891, the News demanded its construction while the federal government put off granting the appropriate funds. Over the years, many cattle and some human lives were lost attempting to ford the river. When the bridge was finally begun in March 1891, the

News was ecstatic, but the government had made no provision for the construction of approaches to the bridge, so it lay idle while people continued to ford the river until the approaches were built the following year. Lethbridge News, 16 September 1891.

[13] W.L. Morton, Manitoba: A History, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 215.

[14] Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1887, p. 543-544. Manitoba Liberal MP, R. Watson, introduced a resolution asking for the discontinuance of disallowance in the case of Manitoba railways. The resolution was subsequently defeated in a straight party vote May 26, 1887.

[15] Lethbridge News, 20 April 1887; Macleod Gazette, 7 June 1887.

[16] H.A. Innis, The History of the Canadian Pacific Railway, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 187. The clause was cancelled in April 1888 in return for the government agreeing to guarantee the interest on a new CPR bond issue.

[17] Canadian Parliamentary Companion, 1887. Viscount Henry Boyle came to the west in early 1883 and began a cattle ranch. He was the eldest son of the Earl of Shannon, and had served with Her Majesty's Rifle Brigade before coming to Canada. In 1885, at age 25, he was elected to the Territorial Council.

[18] Lethbridge News, 24 August 1887.

[19] Macleod Gazette, 23 August 1887.

[20] Lethbridge News, 31 August 1887.

[21] Macleod Gazette, 30 August 1887.

[22] den Otter, op. cit., p. 247.

[23] This independent attitude came to the fore in the 1891 election when Wood refused to support Davis until he promised that Macleod would not be by-passed by the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. Macleod Gazette, 28 February 1891.

[24] Lethbridge News, 20 April 1887.

[25] Macleod Gazette, 29 March 1887.

[26] Lethbridge News, 24 August 1887.

[27] Calgary Herald, 31 October 1887.

[28] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 3. In the years between 1887 and 1891, two non-partisan movements flourished. The first was the abortive irrigation convention in Medicine Hat held in June 1890. Originally planned to include all 22 Territorial electoral districts, the convention

succeeded in attracting representatives from only 6 districts. One of the resolutions pressed in the convention was that it should "formulate a comprehensive political platform ignoring party difficulties." Among those who did attend were Haultain and R.G. Brett. (Lethbridge News, 4 June 1890.) The second movement was the short-lived Northwest Rights Association formed by the Liberals during the 1891 election, apparently for the purpose of attracting support for James Reilly, the Independent-Conservative candidate. (Macleod Gazette, 28 February 1891.)

[29] Lethbridge News, 10 May 1888.

[30] Macleod Gazette, 28 October 1887.

[31] Lethbridge News, 10 May 1888. There is no indication as to whether Saunder's allegations were true.

[32] Ibid., 24 August 1887. Saunders wrote that partyism need not cripple the Assembly as it seemed to have Parliament. He urged that party lines be avoided, and noted that local interests should be the prime concern of all Territorial members.

[33] Edmonton Bulletin, 12 October 1889.

[34] Macdonald papers, Peter McCarthy to Macdonald, 21 October 1889. McCarthy stressed that Lougheed was to best choice for Senator as he was related to both the Hardistys and Donald Smith, while he was a personal friend of Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney.

[35] GAI, W.F. Orr papers, Orr to D.W. Davis, 31 March 1890.

[36] A.O. Macrae, A History of the Province of Alberta, vol. 1, (Regina: Western Canada History Company, 1912), p. 517; see also W.F. Orr papers, Orr to G.A. Eastman, 14 July 1890.

[37] This development was more pronounced after 1895, when Lougheed, along with T.W. Jackson, was accused of "cooking" the Conservative convention for T.B.H. Cochrane.

[38] Canadian Parliamentary Companion, 1889.

[39] E.H. Oliver, The Prairie Provinces, vol. 19 of Canada and Its Provinces, ed. A. Shortt and A. Doughty, (Toronto: Glasgow Brook and Company, 1914), p. 223-24.

[40] Lethbridge News, 21 January 1888.

[41] A comparison of the campaign platforms of Frank Oliver and Haultain reveals that both favored the quick concession of responsible government, the exclusion of party lines from the Assembly, and an end to the liquor permit system. Macleod Gazette, 20 June 1888; Edmonton Bulletin, 23, 30 June 1888.

[42] Canada, House of Commons, Report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Traffic in Canada 1895, p. 178-80.

[43] Ibid., p. 191.

[44] Ibid., p. 181-83. See also D.M. McLeod, "Liquor Control in the North West Territories: the Permit System, 1870-91," Saskatchewan History, XVI, 1963, pp. 81-9.

[45] Calgary Herald, 31 October 1888. The Herald instructed Calgary's two MLA's to work for the abolition of the permit system and the granting to the Assembly of the power to deal with the liquor question.

[46] Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1889, p. 380-82.

[47] E.H. Oliver, "The Contest Between Lieutenant-Governor Royal and The Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories 1888-93," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, (1923), p. 103-04. Oliver states that there was no strong body of opinion favoring responsible government in the Territories.

[48] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 180.

[49] Lethbridge News, 19 February 1890.

[50] Macleod Gazette, 7 November 1889.

[51] Calgary Herald, 5 November 1890.

[52] Dorothy Diller, "The Early Economic Development of Alberta," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1923), p. 114-117.

[53] Lethbridge News, 11 April 1889.

[54] Ibid., 30 January 1891.

[55] Macleod Gazette, 28 February 1891.

[56] Lethbridge News, 17 February 1891.

[57] Ibid., 13 February 1891.

[58] Ibid., 17 February 1891.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Macdonald papers, Alexander Galt to Macdonald, 7 February 1891.

[61] Lethbridge News, 20 February 1891.

[62] Macdonald papers, Donald Smith to Macdonald, 12 February 1891.

[63] Ibid., Donald Smith to Macdonald, 24 February 1891. Macdonald had written Davis' name across the bottom of the letter.

[64] Calgary Tribune, 17 February 1891. Reilly's decision to run as an Independent-Conservative brought him the grudging support of Frank Oliver's Edmonton Bulletin, and the Tribune. Once again, Oliver decided not to run. This decision was apparently the result of his desire to see the struggle for responsible government through to the end, although the weakness of the Liberal party in the district probably contributed to his decision. W.S. Waddell, "The Honorable Frank Oliver," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1950), p. 226-27.

[65] G.H. Ham, The New West, (Winnipeg: Canadian Historical Publishing Company, 1888), p. 21.

[66] Calgary Herald, 4 March 1891.

[67] Along with W.F. Orr, G.C. King and others, Reilly had invested heavily in East Calgary lots. When tenders for a post office were about to be let, Orr, on behalf of the others, pressed Davis to have it built in East Calgary. (Orr papers, Orr to Davis, 31 March 1890). Davis and Lougheed favored the western section of the town however, and eventually had their way, but not before an open dispute had broken out between East Calgary businessmen and Lougheed and Davis. (GAI, Edgar Dewdney papers, Lougheed to Dewdney, 12 October 1891). Lougheed's actions were at least in part influenced by a desire to increase the value of his own holdings of 11 town lots in West Calgary. (M.L. Foran, "The Birth and Expansion of Calgary 1875-1895," paper presented to the Urban History Conference, University of Winnipeg, October 1974).

[68] Lethbridge News, 6 February 1891.

[69] Ibid., 13 February 1891.

[70] Calgary Herald, 22 October 1890.

[71] Lethbridge News, 8 October 1890.

[72] Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1889, p. 380-82.

[73] Canada, Senate, Debates 1890, p. 8.

[74] Calgary Herald, 24 September 1890; 15, 22, 29 October 1890.

[75] Calgary Tribune, 4 March 1891.

[76] Lethbridge News, 27 February 1891.

[77] Ibid., 3 March 1891.

[78] Ibid., 6 March 1891.

[79] Ibid., 10 March 1891.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Macleod Gazette, 28 February 1891.

[82] Lethbridge News, 10 March 1891.

[83] W.F. Orr papers, Orr to G.A. Eastman, 14 July 1890.

[84] Calgary Tribune, 11 February 1891.

[85] Macleod Gazette, 19 March 1891.

[86] Perhaps the most blatant example of corrupt election practice was the ill-famed incident of the "Namaka special." The Conservatives attempted to use men engaged in building the Calgary and Edmonton Railway to swell the vote for Davis. The problem was that most of the men were ineligible to vote, not having resided in the district long enough. When they were challenged and rejected at Calgary polls, a makeshift poll was established at Namaka, 40 miles east of Calgary, and a special train nicknamed the "Namaka special" was provided by the CPR to take the men there. A stalwart Liberal who tried to board the train to halt the "special" was unceremoniously thrown off. (W.J. Carter, Forty Years in the Northwest, in Southern Alberta, History and Tale, vol. 2). Southern Alberta History and Tale is part of the Alberta Folklore Collection housed in the Rare Book Room of the University of Alberta. Election returns show that the total vote for Davis at the Namaka poll was 58; and Reilly received no votes. Lethbridge News, 6 March 1891.

[87] Orr papers, Orr to Elias Orr, 18 March 1891.

[88] Lethbridge News, 10 March 1891. Reilly challenged the Police voters because at the time it was a well-known fact that the Force voted with the Conservative government en masse. R.C. Macleod notes that the Force was expected to contribute to the well-being of the party in power through their vote for government candidates, and that: "In the thinly populated Northwest Territories . . . the large number of Police at places like Regina or Lethbridge could conceivably make the difference between defeat and victory." R.C. Macleod, "The Mounted Police and Politics," in Men in Scarlet, H.A. Dempsey, ed., (Calgary: McClelland and Stewart West, 1974), p. 101.

[89] Ibid.

[90] J.K. Jackson, ed., Affectionately Yours: The Letters of Sir John A. Macdonald and His Family, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1969), Hugh John Macdonald to Macdonald, 7 January 1890, p. 189.

CHAPTER III

BOTH ENDS AGAINST THE MIDDLE
1891 - 1896

The Conservatives had won a conclusive victory at the polls, but the result proved to be of little consolation in the face of the death of the Prime Minister. Exhausted by the vigorous pace of the campaign, and the continuous strain of leading the party for nearly forty years, Macdonald died of a stroke in late June 1891.

The problems caused by his death were painfully obvious. In Alberta, Davis had won two elections through his close association with the Conservative party, but above all with Macdonald.[1] With the "Old Chieftain" gone, it was by no means certain that his successor would be equally committed to continued western development. In this light, district Conservatives came to question the desirability of electing a mere "party man". Perhaps what was needed was a more independent, active representative who would press the interests of the district vigorously. Davis had few of these qualities. His chief virtue had been, and was, as the Calgary Tribune put it, "subserviency."[2] But with Macdonald gone this "quality" was looked on more and more as a drawback.

This change in political outlook, however, was not immediately apparent. The proliferation of disquieting issues in the five years following the 1891 election pushed purely political questions out of the public's eye. The most visible, though not the most important of these was the Manitoba Schools Question, and its aftermath in the Territories leading to the abolition of the dual school board and the abandonment of bilingualism in the Territorial Assembly.

The Manitoba Act of 1870 had provided for an officially bilingual legislature and a dual school system for Protestants and Roman Catholics. At the time, the legislation truly reflected the composition of the population, but massive English-speaking immigration from Ontario after 1870 quickly placed the French-speaking element in a minority position. By the late 1880's demands from the English-speaking population for the abolition of separate schools began to be heard. In 1890 an act was passed by the Liberal Greenway government effectively abolishing separate schools and establishing a uniform "national" system of instruction. The next six years saw the Manitoba Schools Question become the dominant political issue of the day at the federal level. Although the issue was so contentious it could not be avoided by either Conservatives or Liberals, both parties were reluctant to commit themselves to any decisive course of action on such a delicate question. Ultimately though, after submitting the problem to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the Conservative government was faced with the awesome responsibility for passing remedial legislation on the eve of the 1896 election.

In Alberta, the Greenway government's legislation and the federal government's remedial bill in 1896 presented district Conservatives with a difficult problem. They were generally sympathetic to the Manitoba legislation, and perhaps more importantly, the legislative impotence of the Territorial Assembly had left most westerners keenly aware of the power provincial status would confer on the west. As such they were very much opposed to the intervention of the federal government into any specifically provincial field such as education. However, despite this opposition, loyalty to the Conservative party usually prevented an outright denunciation of the federal government's remedial legislation.

The leading Conservative papers best express this conflict between party loyalty and western sentiment. In 1894, E.T. Saunders of the News spoke of the schools question largely in terms of the split it had caused within the ranks of the Conservative party, but was nevertheless in favor of the secularization of all schools. He nevertheless could not bring himself to oppose remedial legislation, noting that whatever his opinions, the federal government clearly had the right to legislate in the matter.[3] The Calgary Herald also refused to damn the government for intervention in Manitoba. Although the Herald favored secularization, the chief problem generated by the schools question was the halt it had called to continued western development. Thus the "wretched schools question" was responsible for having prevented division of the district, construction of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway and an increase in western immigration.[4]

Only one Conservative paper in the district was outspoken in its opposition to both separate schools and remedial legislation. This was the Edmonton News. It had been established in November 1894 by editor and publisher R.P. Pettipiece. Pettipiece initially supported the Conservative government as an independent, but as the 1896 election approached he swung his support over to the Liberals and Frank Oliver, apparently over the schools question. A strong Orangeman, Pettipiece came out firmly against remedial legislation in early June 1896, and from that point on supported Oliver's anti-remedial stance.[5]

As a corollary to the Manitoba Schools Question, the Territorial Assembly became embroiled in a similar dispute in 1892. The spring session of that year saw the Premier pass a Schools Ordinance which established uniform school inspection "irrespective of the religion of the pupils," and which also abolished the dual school board.[6] Haultain's legislation was the product of his drive to create a more efficient, economical school administration, but also the result of an ill-concealed anti-Catholic bias.[7] His action produced the resignation from the Executive Committee of James Clinkskill, a Roman Catholic, who claimed he had not been consulted before the Ordinance was passed.[8]

Haultain moved quickly to replace Clinkskill, but was also forced to appoint Calgary MLA Hugh Cayley in his own place because of a necessary absence of two months pressing Territorial demands in Ottawa.[9] During Haultain's absence, the ambitious Cayley, acting with those Roman Catholics opposed to Haultain's Schools Ordinance, and several members of the moderate group in the Assembly, schemed to take over the leadership of the Executive Committee.[10]

On Haultain's return in August 1892, Cayley moved a successful non-confidence motion in the Assembly and managed to defeat the Haultain Committee by the slim margin of 13 to 12. He then assumed the leadership of the Assembly with his own Committee of Thomas McKay, Daniel Mowat and Joel Reaman.[11] He held this position until November when a bye-election to replace Reaman who had died of typhoid fever returned a Haultain supporter. This shattered Cayley's precarious majority in the Assembly and resulted in his resignation on November 17.[12]

Throughout the struggle over the Schools Ordinance and the unseating of the Haultain Committee, the Alberta press was unanimous in its support of Haultain's Ordinance and their denunciation of Cayley's takeover. Cayley's actions were compared to those of the "notorious Brett-Betts faction" in 1889, and it was further suggested that

> Mr. Cayley no doubt proposes himself to be a member of the executive and to take credit for its successes, whilst poor Mr. Betts, the nominal leader, will be pushed forward as the scapegoat to answer for any blunders.[13]

At the federal level, neither Davis nor Lougheed took strong positions on the schools questions. Referring to the Manitoba problem in 1891, Davis stated that it was not an important issue in the west when compared to the need for rapid development.[14] In a speech in the Senate in 1894, Lougheed dealt with the Northwest Schools Question rather differently, taking a strictly legalistic view of the question. He maintained that the Territorial Assembly had the legal power to pass ordinances affecting education, and thus there could be no dispute over the question.[15]

Perhaps the most important consequence of the Northwest Schools Question, at least for the Alberta Conservative party, was the fall of Hugh Cayley and the resulting dominance of Haultain. Cayley had been viewed up to 1892 as a possible rival to Haultain's leadership of the Assembly.[16] He was aggressive, eloquent and ambitious, and as early as 1889 had shown vigorous opposition to Haultain's first Advisory Council.[17] But like R.G. Brett in 1889, Cayley's actions in the Assembly brought upon him the wrath of most of the Conservative papers in the district In both cases the focal point of the problem was rivalry with Haultain; and both Cayley and Brett found that overthrowing the highly popular Premier worked to their own detriment. The defeat of Cayley, and Brett before him, left Alberta with only one prominent member of the Assembly

--Haultain. But Haultain remained committed to Territorial politics, and it would be very difficult for anyone to move from the Assembly into federal politics without first surpassing him.

More important than the schools questions, the autonomy issue continued to simmer after 1891. Initially led by James Reilly and others outside of Territorial politics, the movement soon crept into the Territorial Assembly. Its champion was R.G. Brett, but he was ably supported in his cause by C.A. Magrath of Lethbridge. Brett's argument for provincial status centred around the financial benefits which would accrue to the district based on the "full utilization" of her resources. He also stressed that Alberta, because of her mining and ranching interests, had become different from the more easterly portions of the Northwest, and thus should seek separate status.[18]

Brett's ideas found support in Calgary and the north. Calgary, in a dominant economic position in the district, and the obvious choice for provincial capital, was very much in favor of provincial status, and had been the birthplace of the provincial status movement. The north, for its part, saw in autonomy an opportunity for greater financial assistance than it had received under Territorial government.[19] In the south, despite Magrath's support for the movement, there was opposition. Both the News and the Gazette opposed provincial status urging that the fight for responsible government be won first, and advocating that autonomy wait until the Territorial population was large enough to warrant the move. Wood stated his position plainly when he said there was "no widespread dissatisfaction with the existing state of affairs, and no wish to form an independent government."[20] In their opinions, the two papers mirrored the attitude of Haultain, who also paralleled sentiments in the ranching community which opposed provincial status as potentially damaging to the ranching industry.[21]

The third issue dominating the district in the years from 1891 to 1896 was the perennial question of development. As usual, federal expenditures could not keep pace with demands for local improvements, extended services or rail construction. However, in this case, the complaints raised in the district seemed to be justified. The Calgary Herald, though a staunch supporter of the government, cried in early June 1896 that because of the schools question and the uncertain leadership of the party, little in the way of promoting irrigation or railway extension was being done, and cautioned the government to "take the warning of its friends and let its members cease their infernal quarrels and attend to business . . . ."[22]

The revolving leadership of the federal Conservative Party and the Manitoba Schools Question were undoubtedly obstacles to adequate interest in and funding of western development. The quick succession of Prime Ministers from J.J.C. Abbott to Mackenzie Bowell made it difficult for each to become acquainted with the needs of the west. This lack of attention was keenly felt in Alberta, and in 1893, E.T. Saunders wrote:

> Mr. Laurier and his party could scarcely do less for the country than the administrations of Sir John Thompson or Sir John Abbott have done . . . .[23]

It became a common western complaint that the Conservatives had not shown enough interest in the west since the death of Macdonald. But the unfortunate fact was that Macdonald's shoes were simply too large to fill.[24]

In this light, the Manitoba Schools Question served only to aggravate the problem. Thus, the issue was lamented in Alberta not so much for the dissension it had caused between French and English-speaking Canada, but rather for the fact that the federal government's preoccupation with the question prevented western development from proceeding apace.

Like the constant demands for development, the tariff was also an ongoing bone of contention throughout the period. A system of protection to benefit eastern manufacturers had largely been accepted grudgingly by westerners as the necessary concomitant of railway construction and immigration. But the early years of the 1890's brought little improvement in the depression which had beset the west since 1883, and immigration proved to be meagre at best. On the other hand, the western farmer labored under the virtual monopoly which the CPR exerted over rail transport. These three elements of immigration, protective tariff and railway construction were bound together by the National Policy. But because rail development and immigration had slowed considerably during the 1890's, westerners came to resent the cost of the protective tariff when the related benefits of the National Policy were not forthcoming. One of the results of this resentment was the growth of substantial opposition to the tariff.

C.E.D. Wood had opposed the tariff since the birth of the Gazette, and his opposition had not lessened by 1896. Added to his outcry against protection was the voice of the Lethbridge News in 1894, and the fledgling Edmonton News two years later. Both papers complained that the tariff served only the needs of the east while the west was forced to pay high implement prices and faced restricted markets for its own produce.[25] As in 1891, the Herald stood alone in its support of virtually all aspects of government policy. This was certainly true of protection, but the Herald adroitly linked its support of the tariff to western development. Without the tariff, editor J.J. Young argued, there would be less federal monies available to the west, an argument which Conservative candidate T.B.H. Cochrane was to later adopt in the 1896 election.[26]

Therefore, although there was general agreement on the need for local control of schools and on such issues as development of irrigation and railway extension, significant divisions appeared between Calgary and the outlying towns--both north and south--over the tariff, while southern papers opposed the Herald's stand on the autonomy question.

Calgary had dominated the district politically since the election of 1887, but the south had constantly demonstrated that it would not submit meekly to the dictates of the ranching capital. C.E.D. Wood and, to a lesser extent, E.T. Saunders had severely criticized both the actions of Calgary in general and the Calgary executive of the Conservative party in particular. This independence surfaced even more vigorously in the period between the 1891 and 1896 elections.

Opposition to the political control of Calgary was largely an outgrowth of the metropolitan rivalry among district towns. During the 1880's and 1890's, this rivalry was made all the more vigorous by the depression that beset the west.[27] Even towns on the transcontinental line experienced little growth for twenty years after their founding.[28] Although Calgary assumed the dominant metropolitan role in Alberta, economic conditions made it extremely difficult for it to extend its influence simply because most of the town's financial enterprise was directed towards keeping Calgary alive. Thus Lethbridge, Macleod and Calgary vied among themselves to serve as distribution points for the ranching industry or become divisional points for the CPR. Macleod, because of her lack of rail facilities, was very early eliminated from a significant role in the metropolitan struggle, but it is evident that Lethbridge, as late as the turn of the century, had ambitions of supplanting or at least equalling Calgary as the leading town in the district.[29] This economic contest was transferred into politics, and both Lethbridge and Macleod vigorously asserted themselves against the political control of Calgary.

In this period of slow growth, the key to prosperity was the railway. With the completion of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway, and its extension south to Macleod in 1892, one phase in the railway development of the district was ended, and another begun.[30] By 1892 all the major towns of the district were served by rail lines. From this date to the 1896 election, the most pressing demand in both north and south was for the westward extension of existing rail facilities. Calgary, of course, had a western extension to Vancouver, but the south pressed for the construction of a rail line west from Lethbridge through the Crow's Nest Pass to the rich mineral wealth of the Kootenays. In the north, a line from Edmonton through the Yellowhead Pass to the coast was the priority.[31]

The desire to build a railway to the Crow's Nest was not a new development. In 1889, Alexander Galt had obtained a charter to build the road, but little had been done in the way of construction. In 1893, Galt sold the charter to the CPR and also leased his Dunmore to Lethbridge railway to the Company.[32] The CPR's takeover of the charter was initially attacked in the south. It was hoped that the Galt Company would be able to construct the line because it was feared that the CPR had no immediate plans to build the road. When it was rumored that the CPR was moving to buy out the Galt charter, E.T. Saunders could not refrain from blaming the government's intimate political connections with CPR for the railway's virtual monopoly in the west. Thus he noted:

> The election fund of the Conservatives has been formed to a large extent of contributions from the CPR, the government has, in return . . . conferred benefit after benefit on this huge railway monopoly at the expense of the people of Canada.[33]

Despite this opposition, the simple fact that construction of the railway was finally about to begin ultimately proved to be more important than the expansion of the rail company's control of western transportation, and the News soon was reconciled to the CPR's construction of the line.

Along with the rail issue, the south was most concerned with the need for irrigation. Demands for irrigation resulted in the formation of the Southwest Irrigation League in 1894 in Calgary.[34] More important from a practical standpoint was the attempt by the Galt Company and the Morman community in the southwest to construct a massive irrigation project. Both the project and the League failed however. The federal government feared that inauguration of irrigation on a large scale would seriously harm immigration by implying the prairies were arid and unsuited for farming. As a result of this fear, the government was unwilling to fund such projects as the one proposed by the Galts and the Mormon community.[35]

Despite the number of disturbing issues that arose in the west from 1891 to 1896, and the lack of spectacular growth, there had been changes in the district. The Alberta of 1896 was not the Alberta of 1891.

The construction of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway had begun a significant swing in settlement patterns that eventually gave the north a larger population than the south. Two reasons lay behind this development. First, the lands and climate of the north proved more conducive to homestead farming than the more arid south. Secondly, the hostility of the ranching community to massive settlement in the south coupled with the abundance of available land in the north turned the tide of settlement northward.[36] This shift in immigration is aptly demonstrated by homestead entries during the period. Counting the Calgary district as part of the south, in 1891 there were 275 entries in the south and 509 in the north. By 1895 however, there were only 221 entries in the south, a drop of over 50, while in the north 732 entries were registered.[37]

The most important political consequence of this shift in settlement was the demand heard in both north and south for the creation of two federal constituencies in the district. It had long been recognized that the economic interests of the two areas were divergent, and each election seemed to bring forth fresh charges that the south, by virtue of its larger population, discriminated against the north.

In the Conservative party, this sectional conflict had been painfully evident in the 1887 election contest between Davis and Hardisty. In the 1891 election as well, though less obvious, objections to Davis' candidacy based on regional grounds were raised. In February that year H.A. Young, an Edmonton Conservative, had written Donald Smith that:

> Northern Alberta opposes Davies [sic]
> . . . and any Liberal running against
> Davies will get support here.[38]

One of the problems of the north was that, apart from individuals like Rev. Gaetz of Red Deer and Dr. Wilson of Edmonton, no official party organization existed. This prevented the north from gaining a voice in the inner councils of the party. In 1892 however, this situation was finally remedied. A Conservative Association was formed in September with Edmonton lawyer J.C.F. Bown at its head.[39]

The first consideration of the new association was the establishment of a Conservative paper. After considering several possible editors, among them E.T. Saunders, the Edmonton News was finally established in 1894. Its editor was R.P. Pettipiece who had formerly worked as a reporter on the Brandon Sun.[40] It was decided to run the paper as an Independent-Conservative organ to avoid appearing in the Liberal-dominated north as merely a party organ.[41]

A more significant move taken by the Edmonton Association was its petition of March 1895 demanding division of the district. The basis for this demand was the assertion that "the interests and resources of Northern Alberta are diverse from those of the southern portion."[42] The high priority to what amounted to a division not only of the district but of the Alberta Conservative party itself may be taken as a further indication of the strength of sectional differences between north and south.

Expectation that the district would be divided played a major role in preparations for the election of 1896, and to it, at least in part, can be attributed the defeat of the Conservative party in Alberta.[43] Because it was anticipated a division would take place, Conservatives in the north expected to nominate their own candidate. Thus Pettipiece urged that Frank Oliver would not be the best representative of the north because his criticism of the Conservative government would leave him "on the outs" with the new Tory administration.[44] Pettipiece made no mention of the south in his editorials, and until the latter stages of the campaign there was little communication or cooperation between Conservative Associations in the north and south.[45]

Uncertainty over division was not the only problem plaguing the Conservative party at the time. Early in 1895 Lieutenant T.B.H. Cochrane surfaced as a prospective candidate for the election, expected in June of that year. Cochrane was a remittance man, the son of British admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane. He had come to Alberta in 1885 to begin a cattle ranch, but his career in the district subsequent to that date had been marked by a succession of spectacular failures. From his unstocked 55,000 acre ranch to his bankrupt sawmill, to his unsuccessful attempt to turn the town of Mitford into a personal empire, Cochrane's talent for losing money seemed matched only by his ability to acquire new funds from his parents.[46]

He emerged as a candidate in response to Davis' apparent desire not to seek a third term. Davis had in fact been attempting since 1892 to find some lucrative government position and retire from politics. However, delay in securing a government post had prompted him to consider running again and had left some members of the party in a state of uncertainty about the upcoming nominations.[47]

If he had run again, Davis' record as a MP during his second term had not been one upon which to base a campaign. He seldom spoke in the House, and had said nothing at all about such important issues as the Northwest Schools Question, the tariff and irrigation. His inactivity was never directly challenged by the Alberta Conservative press, but by 1895-96, oblique references to the type of representation that should be sent to Ottawa made it very plain that his record was far from satisfactory. The Macleod Gazette noted in December 1894 that a more rational method of selection of candidates was needed, as former candidates were either political hacks or well-intentioned men of little ability who could afford to stand.[48]

Lougheed's performance had been more impressive. He spoke often in the Senate on such questions as the Northwest Schools Question and the government's prohibition plebiscite, and supported the Northwest Irrigation Act introduced in 1894 by the government.[49] Unfortunately Lougheed was not particularly popular in the south. By 1896, through his close association with Hardisty's campaign in 1887, his connection with the autonomy movement which was opposed in the south, and his apparent pre-occupation with the needs of Calgary to the exclusion of the remainder of the district, Lougheed had become very much persona non grata in the south.[50]

Nevertheless, anticipating Davis' retirement, Lougheed and a group of Calgary Conservatives, including T.W. Jackson and Joseph Millward, decided to sponsor Cochrane.[51] They were not deterred by the possibility of the party's being in public disarray should Davis choose to remain in politics. Most members of the group had been strong Hardisty men in 1887, and only reluctantly supported Davis in 1891. Cochrane's candidacy was announced on January 9, 1895.[52] In late February it was further announced that a Conservative convention would be held in Calgary on March 13 to nominate a candidate for the expected federal elections.[53]

Reaction in the south to what appeared to be a powerplay on the part of the Calgary Association was immediate and violent. Saunders criticized Cochrane for his independent stand as he had both Reilly and Hardisty in previous elections. As to the proposed convention, he complained that notice of the meeting was too short, especially for the more remote areas of the district. He also objected to the basis for the selection of the delegates, which he believed was slanted in favor of the Calgary association.[54] Wood was equally vehement: Cochrane was "utterly distasteful as a candidate to the Conservatives of southern Alberta,"[55] and he warned that if the convention should happen to choose Cochrane, "a very large number of votes will go to Oliver."[56] Pettipiece was no less opposed to Cochrane than was the south. Following the Cochrane convention, he implied that Cochrane and his backers had "bought" the nomination, and bitterly complained, "Cochrane's money pals and his muzzled presses think they are running the whole show."[57]

As far as the south was concerned, Cochrane might be the figurehead of the movement, but the real powers behind his candidacy were Lougheed and Jackson. Lougheed had by this time become a much-disliked symbol of the control the Calgary Association exerted over the district. In mid-March 1895 following the Conchrane convention, C.E.D. Wood accused Lougheed and Jackson of being the moving forces behind the packed convention.[58] W.F. Orr was even more specific about the actions of the two in "cooking" the convention, claiming they had forced through the Calgary Association a printed list of delegates who had all been bought off by Cochrane money.[59] A year later, Orr was still railing against the "wire pulling" done by Jackson.[60]

Accusations heard in both north and south that Cochrane, with the help of Lougheed and Jackson, had bought the convention and particularly the support of both the Herald and the Tribune seem to have some grain of truth in them. Though running as an Independent-Conservative, Cochrane received the support of both the usually virulently Conservative Herald and the Liberal Tribune. The Herald's editor, J.J. Young, supported Cochrane's tariff policies and claimed that as the first Conservative candidate in the field, Cochrane should receive the support of all district Conservatives.[61] The Tribune mirrored these statements closely, also adding that Cochrane's large--if unsuccessful--financial dealings in the west made certain he had the best interests of the country at heart.[62] Both papers further agreed on the potential candidacy of Premier Haultain. They asserted that if he decided to run it would have to be as a "second" candidate because Cochrane had priority by virtue of his being the first to enter the race. The Tribune further added that Haultain would probably be constitutionally unable to resign his Territorial seat before the elections.[63] Such unanimity from such old and vigorous rivals as the Herald and the Tribune does tend to suggest the possible influence of Cochrane money.

The Cochrane convention--as it came to be called--went off on March 13 without a hitch. Apart from Cochrane, only one other candidate, T.B. Stone, appeared. He quickly withdrew in Cochrane's favor, and it was later claimed by Wood that even this move had been orchestrated by Lougheed and Jackson to make the contest seem open.[64]

The absence of delegates from Edmonton, Macleod, Lethbridge and Pincher Creek strongly underlines the disfavor Cochrane and the Calgary Association met with in the district outside of Calgary, and Wesley Orr's prediction of the course of the convention seems to adequately sum up its pro-Cochrane nature. Immediately before the convention he wrote:

> There was a plot laid and carried out to leave all the old workers off the delegation. A printed list of delegates was passed around and declared carried. There is no doubt about there being a compact organization and everything cut and dried for their favorite.[65]

The Calgary Association's actions were first met with cries of indignation, then with organization. When it became apparent that the March convention was being "cooked" by the pro-Cochrane group, J.R. Costigan, president of the district association warned Alberta Conservatives that

> paid emissaries of self-constituted candidates are at large in the constituency and are working towards the organization of a partisan so-called Conservative Association.[66]

Other Conservatives were willing to do more than merely warn their brothers. On March 4, E.T. Saunders telegraphed Edmonton MLA Dr. Wilson, proposing that an alternate meeting of dissident Conservatives assemble on March 21 to select their own candidate.[67] With the help of C.E.D. Wood and district association vice-president, J.J. Edmiston of Edmonton, Saunders succeeded in arranging the convention. The basis for representation was to be fixed at ten delegates per association.[68]

The reaction of the Cochrane group to a new convention was predictable. J.B. Smith, secretary of the Calgary Association informed the anti-Cochrane faction on March 9 that there was no time to arrange a new convention.[69] Despite the objection of the Cochrane camp, the second convention was held on March 21. Delegates were sent by Lethbridge, Pincher Creek, Macleod, Carston, Edmonton and Victoria. Not surprisingly, the choice of the delegates was Premier Haultain who had earlier been selected as a candidate in Lethbridge after both Davis and Magrath had withdrawn in his favor.[70]

Haultain's candidacy seems to have been more of a protest against the tactics of the Cochrane group than a serious attempt to stand. Wood noted that the essential reason for an alternate convention was to "get Mr. T. Cochrane . . . out of the field in some way or another."[71] The most convenient method of doing this was to provide an alternate candidate prestigious enough to force Cochrane to drop the nomination, and with Conservatives like Hugh and P.G. Brett somewhat discredited by their earlier attacks against the Premier in the Territorial Assembly, Haultain was the obvious choice for the nomination. E.T. Saunders provides further justification for this thesis. He reported that Haultain himself was very reluctant to stand, and did so only after Davis and Magrath had declined the nomination.[72] The Haultain convention, then, was not engineered to present the Premier as a serious contender for the nomination, but was rather designed to chastise the Calgary Association, to teach the "wire pullers that the Conservative party in Alberta should not be debauched with Tammany tactics."[73]

The convention itself represented the various district associations equally. Dr. Wilson chaired the meeting, while its secretary was S.F. Taylor of Edmonton. The executive committee was composed of C.C. McCaul, a Conservative lawyer from Lethbridge, C.E.D. Wood, and Rev. Gaetz of Red Deer. Cochrane was invited to place his name before the convention, but judiciously declined. This resulted in district president Costigan introducing a motion denouncing the Cochrane convention.[74]

Thus, at the end of March 1895, the district Conservative party was badly divided. Two candidates were in the field; both the north and south were feuding with the Calgary Association, the strongest in the district; and a federal election was expected in June. The prospect was bleak, and, as C.E.D. Wood dramatically put it, "one to make the Gods weep and the Liberals smile with unholy joy."[75]

Smiling they were indeed. The Liberals had in fact already chosen Frank Oliver as their standard bearer. Always regarded as the only Liberal capable of defeating the Conservatives, Oliver was unanimously chosen by a Liberal convention held in Calgary in February.[76] Given the growing strength of the Liberals, and the disunion of the Conservatives, the chances that Oliver would win the election seemed extremely good.

Fortunately for the Conservatives, the election was postponed. Postponement should have provided the party with the breathing space it needed to patch up the differences between the two factions and form a strong, united organization to fight the growing threat posed by Oliver. Despite the opportunity, reconciliation was difficult and slow in coming. Throughout the summer and fall of 1895 a hostile silence was maintained between the two camps. Finally, in the spring of 1896, overtures were made to the Calgary Association about the possibility of a third convention being called. In early March Saunders demanded a new convention, with changes in the method of representation which would ensure a fair distribution of voting power among the associations.[77] This was followed by a more moderate suggestion by district president Costigan who, in an open letter to F.A. Stimson, president of the Cochrane convention, simply urged the need for a reconciliation.[78]

The major stumbling blocks to reunion were the Herald and Cochrane himself. In March 1896 he made it very clear that he would submit to a new convention only if the district was divided into two constituencies. His reason for this assertion was that his 1895 convention would be invalidated if division took place.[79] The Herald for its part felt that Cochrane's nomination should be upheld to "avoid further dissension" within the party.[80] However, faced with pressure from Costigan and the district association, coupled with the unpleasant prospect of fighting an election without the majority of district Conservatives on Cochrane's side, they both ultimately relented. A new convention was held in Calgary on May 17 with delegates present from all the district associations.

The new district association formed at the convention indicated the Haultain faction had won at least a moral victory over the Cochrane group. J.R. Costigan was reaffirmed as district president, while his vice-presidents were C.A. Magrath of Lethbridge, C.E.D. Wood, R.G. Brett, Dr. Wilson, F.H. Stimson, MLA Fraser Tims, and Mormon leader C.O. Card. With the exception of Stimson, the remainder of the new officers had all been supporters of the Haultain convention.[81] Candidates for the nomination were Cochrane, Magrath, T.B. Stone, Dr. Wilson, Thomas Muir of Edmonton and Dr. Brett. Despite their previous objections to Cochrane, all withdrew in his favor, and his nomination was made unanimous.

It is difficult to explain exactly why Cochrane gained the nomination in view of the massive objections to his candidacy raised in 1895. The basis for delegate selection ensured each association an equal number of votes, and it is apparent that both the north and south sent strong contingents.[82] It can only be speculated that the expectation that the district would be divided played a major role in Cochrane's selection.[83] The south had been solidly Conservative in the two previous elections and there was little chance this pattern would change. As such, it seems probable that it was decided in Calgary to patch up the dispute between the two factions and go on to an easy victory in the anticipated new southern constituency. The south had stood on principle and had chastised Cochrane for his untoward action in March 1895, and appeared satisfied with Cochrane's submission to a new convention.

Cochrane's nomination seems remarkable, but possibly equally remarkable was the disappearance of Haultain. Although his nomination in 1895 had been initially surrounded by a good deal of self-righteous enthusiasm, interest in the Premier soon faded. When southern papers began to announced the possibility of a new convention early in 1896, it was C.A. Magrath and not Haultain who was touted as the south's candidate.[84] Haultain's refusal to enter the 1896 convention lends further credence to the thesis that his nomination in 1895 had perhaps partly been designed to make it plain to Cochrane that he must seek the approval of the district association as well as that of Calgary Conservatives.

The task of selecting a Conservative candidate being finally over, it was necessary to reorganize for the elections which were to be held on June 27. Despite all the unrest within the party, a positive sidelight to the problems of 1895-96 was that most local associations had already begun organizational activity and, although this activity was the result of the split within the party, it at least served to whip the Conservatives into some degree of readiness for the federal election.

The Calgary Association was possibly the most prepared of all. Their organization, led by Lougheed, Jackson and P.J. Nolan acted quickly to form a local committee for Cochrane immediately after the 1896 convention.[85] Lethbridge followed suit with its own local committee in late May.[86] Macleod had acted much earlier in response to the expected convention, and had formed its committee in April.[87] The Edmonton Association, participating in its first federal election, made its local executive, elected in 1895, do double duty as an election committee.[88]

Apart from the newly formed Edmonton Association, the leadership of the various locals had remained relatively constant since 1891. In Calgary, Costigan, Lougheed and Jackson remained to promote Conservative interests, Rev. Gaetz still dominated Red Deer, and Dr. Brett was still the power in Banff.[89] Missing from the faithful in Calgary were James Reilly who was closely wrapped up in his campaign for provincial status, and Hugh Cayley who had moved his family and law practice to British Columbia in late 1893.[90] In Lethbridge, C.F.P. Coneybeare, H. Bentley, J.T. McNabb and E.T. Saunders all remained, but the Galt Company did not take as active a role in the election as it had in 1891.[91] Macleod was still dominated by Haultain and Wood, while John Herron and G.C. Ives were the strongest Conservatives in the Pincher Creek district.[92]

The federal party took even less of a hand in organization than it had in 1891. Because of the turmoil within the cabinet over the rapid succession of leaders and the schools question, the Prime Minister did not bother to approve or reject Cochrane's candidacy. In fact the only federal recognition accorded Cochrane came in 1895 from Minister of the Interior T.M. Daly. He had written J.C.F. Bown in February saying that Cochrane would be a "splendid representative," but most of his letter was taken up with a discussion of the need for a bridge across the North

Saskatchewan, and the reference to Cochrane seemed added only as an afterthought.[93] There was no further comment on the constituency by federal Tories, nor was there any attempt by the Cochrane group to hold up their candidate as the "official" choice of the government.

From a strictly organizational point of view, it may be said that the Conservatives seemed ready for the election. Admittedly they had left selection of a candidate rather late, but the difference between Calgary and the outlying districts appeared to have been patched up. A second promising factor in Cochrane's favor was the control the Conservatives exerted over the newspapers of the district. With the Tribune's support and the foundation of the pro-government Edmonton News in 1894, five out of six district papers were potentially Cochrane supporters. Finally, the district had been solidly Conservative in the past, and its dominant ranching elite had strong ties with the federal Conservatives Thus, despite the problems generated by Cochrane's candidacy, the Conservatives appeared to stand a good chance of coming back to win the election.

It soon became painfully obvious, however, that Cochrane was fighting a losing battle against Oliver. In fact, Cochrane's organization was only strong on paper. In the south, the bastion of district Conservatism, both the News and the Gazette supported Cochrane only reluctantly, while in the north, Pettipiece, angered with Cochrane's stance on remedial legislation and obviously attracted to the possibility of the north finally electing one of its own, swung to Oliver. The 1896 election marked the re-emergence of the north-south sectional rivalry in the district. This time however, the south, emasculated by its reluctance to support Cochrane, failed to assert itself strongly enough to win.[94]

The date of the election left only a little over a month for campaigning. Cochrane split his time evenly between north and south, spending the opening week of the campaign in Edmonton and returning to the north with Hugh John Macdonald during the closing days of the contest.[95]

As in previous elections, the candidates' platforms were published in all newspapers in the form of an address to the electors. Cochrane began his with the usual expression of fealty to the Conservative party. Included in the platform was his support for the tariff which, he stressed, "involves the protection of native industries to ensure . . . a home market for agricultural products . . .." To temper the conviction that he was merely a "party man", Cochrane avowed his right to independence in all matters affecting the west.[96]

The more concrete planks in his platforms included advocacy of preferential trade with Great Britain, aid to western agriculture in the form of selected tariff revisions, construction of the Hudson's Bay Railway and the Crow's Nest Pass line, extended branch line construction, increased immigration and maintenance of Northwest Mounted Police force levels. On the more delicate issue of the schools question, he stated his belief in the sanctity of provincial rights, but admitted that he would be honor bound to accept the right and duty of the federal government to enact remedial legislation.[97]

Oliver's platform was based on a tariff for revenue only, increased rail competition, construction of the Hudson's Bay Railway, and opposition to the government's course of action in the schools question.[98] Sectional differences emerged between him and Cochrane over rail construction. Oliver advocated the building of a line from Edmonton through Jasper Pass to the coast, while Cochrane urged completion of the Crow's Nest Pass to the coast.[99]

Throughout the campaign, the Cochrane group attempted to make the contest an issue of policy rather than personality. The Herald and Tribune, Cochrane's principal organs, stressed this point repeatedly. In March 1895, Tribune editor T.B. Braden noted that the policy of the Liberal party embraced principles "which render adequate measures of development impossible."[100] Immediately preceding election day the Herald emphasized this point, saying Oliver's chief election plank was objection to expenditure, but that "without expenditure we can never have new railways, immigration, public works . . . ."[101]

This tactic had been used effectively against Davis' opponents in the two previous elections. This time however it proved a rather timeworn approach. Macdonald was dead, both the north and south were unhappy with Cochrane, there had been little significant attention to western development because of the leadership problem and the schools question, and the Liberals had finally succeeded in persuading Oliver to run. All these factors made it imperative that the Conservatives field a strong, vigorous personality to combat Oliver. Cochrane was not such a man.

By contrast, Frank Oliver was a compelling orator and an extremely popular figure in the west. In the Legislative Assembly he had been closely associated with the responsible government movement. He had a reputation for being an independent-minded man strongly committed to western development. On the podium he simply outshone Cochrane, who was a mediocre speaker at best and, apart from the controversy surrounding the 1895 convention, little known throughout the district.

Nothing better points out the difference between the two men in practical politicking than the June 11 meeting in Edmonton, at which time both men discussed the prohibition question. Oliver was a passionate prohibitionist, while Cochrane could hardly have been called even a temperance man. When called upon to express his views on the subject, Cochrane stood up and merely said "I like my grog myself," and sat down amid hoots of derision. Oliver, on the other hand made a long eloquent speech on the topic, and although advocating a policy which was little favored in the district, was well received.[102]

Besides the loyal and diligent work done by such party stalwarts as J.R. Costigan and T.W. Jackson, Cochrane was aided by Minister of the Interior Hugh John Macdonald.[103] Macdonald spent over a week travelling the district from north to south appearing with Cochrane, but even Macdonald could not add life to Cochrane's campaign.[104] Neither Wood nor Saunders expressed great interest in the campaign, and it could be speculated that as far as they were concerned, Cochrane had already lost the election.

With the south lukewarm at best, and the north hostile, Cochrane had to reply on the support of Calgary to carry the day. Massive support was by no means certain however. Cochrane there faced a tight Liberal organization led by Dr. Lafferty and A.L. Sifton on the one hand, and the opposition of several prominent Conservatives such as W.F. Orr on the other.[105]

Ultimately it was the loss of his southern support which proved to be the most crucial factor in his defeat. The campaign centred mainly on the old issues--the tariff, development policy, and the need for rail construction. The addition of the schools question was not terribly important to the outcome of the election. What was important was the way in which Cochrane had been forced on southern Conservatives. In 1887, the party had been nearly destroyed by the machinations of Lougheed and Jackson; in 1896, coupled with a weak and uncertain federal leadership, and the unresolved question of the division of the district, the desire of these two men to force their own candidate on an unwilling party must be accounted the major reason for the second revolt of the south and the defeat of the Conservative party in Alberta.

Oliver won a convincing victory over Cochrane by a vote of 1649 to 1305. The third candidate in the field, S.J. Clarke of Calgary, polled a mere 43 votes. Cochrane won only 17 of 45 polls in the district, and was defeated outright in Calgary and Edmonton. Even his southern support was very much diminished. In Lethbridge he won only a 41 vote majority over Oliver and he outpolled his opponent by a mere 28 votes in Macleod. More revealing than this is the fact that Cochrane was beaten in such staunch Conservative towns as Pincher Creek and High River. Perhaps the crowning irony was that in Mitford, the town he created, he was decisively beaten by Oliver.[106]

In a rather gloomy post-mortem, C.E.D. Wood expressed the sentiments of most Alberta Conservatives when he said:

> Alberta is overwhelmingly Conservative, and it is really Conservative votes which elected Mr. Oliver. Cochrane's defeat was caused by circumstances the Conservatives of Alberta will never permit to be repeated.[107]

E.T. Saunders was more bitter than philosophical about the defeat and raised the old issue of sectional conflict. He stated that with Oliver in office,

> Southern Alberta will have to wait for any
> roads and bridges that it requires until the
> district is divided.[108]

J.J. Young of the Herald pointed out that Cochrane's defeat was the result of Oliver's strong organization, his stress on "freight rates and hard times," and a campaign based primarily on personality rather than policies.[109] Only Pettipiece rejoiced in Oliver's victory, calling him "the peoples' choice," and referring to Cochrane as the "wooden man."[110]

Cochrane himself was not overly disturbed at his loss. Despite the fact that the campaign had personally cost him $20,000, he wrote that he had decided to write the whole experience off, abandon his substantial failures, "quit Alberta for good--and shake the dust off my feet."[111]

The election defeat put the Conservatives out of power, the party in disarray, and a northern Alberta Liberal MP in the Commons. The outlook for the future did not augur well for either the Conservative party or the south. It was obvious that a massive re-organization of the party was needed, but Lougheed and Jackson had been discredited, Haultain seemed committed to the Territorial Assembly, and no other Conservative stood out in the district. Leadership of the party in effect lay dormant until 1897 when a young New Brunswick lawyer named R.B. Bennett burst on the political scene.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Lethbridge News, 15 June 1892. Saunders wrote "With us support of the Conservative party has always meant support of Sir John A. Macdonald."

[2] Calgary Tribune, 11 February 1891; Lethbridge News, 26 December 1894. In 1894, Saunders was writing: "We have reached an epoch . . . when the necessity for our being represented by a strong and able man has become vividly apparent, and we cannot allow our representatives to go to the highest bidder."

[3] Lethbridge News, 26 December 1894.

[4] Calgary Herald, 20 May 1896.

[5] Edmonton News, 11 June 1896.

[6] L.H. Thomas, The Struggle for Responsible Government in the Northwest Territories 1870-97, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 214.

[7] M.R. Lupul, The Roman Catholic Church and the Northwest Schools Question, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), p. 72.

[8] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 214.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Archives of Saskatchewan, Mitchell-Hobart Store Correspondence, File number 6--Hugh Cayley Correspondence, Cayley to Hillyard Mitchell, 6 July 1892. Cayley noted that Haultain was a "difficult fellow" to work with, and was getting unpopular all around. On this basis he predicted a change in leadership the following session.

[11] E.H. Oliver, "The Struggle between Lieutenant-Governor Royal and the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories 1888-93," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, (1923), p. 81.

[12] L.H. Thomas, op. cit., p. 218.

[13] Lethbridge News, 31 August 1892. Unlike the editors of the various district papers, the French-speaking element in Alberta opposed Haultain's Ordinance very strongly. The St. Albert Assemblyman, Antonio Prince, introduced a non-confidence motion in the Haultain Committee over the matter in January 1892. The motion was subsequently defeated. E.J. Hart, "The History of the French-Speaking Community of Edmonton 1875-1935," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), p. 49.

[14] Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1891, p. 3922.

[15] Canada, Senate, Debates 1894, p. 161.

[16] L.H. Thomas, *op*. *cit*., p. 217.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] *Ibid*., p. 256-57.

[19] *Edmonton News*, 20 January 1896.

[20] *Macleod Gazette*, 4 February 1896.

[21] *Edmonton News*, 6 March 1895. This theory was advanced by the *News*. Pettipiece accused both the *Lethbridge News* and the *Gazette* of being little more than mouthpieces for the ranching industry.

[22] *Calgary Herald*, 4 June 1896.

[23] *Lethbridge News*, 5 October 1893.

[24] Prime Minister Bowell especially rankled under western demands for development. In January 1896 he complained that if each demand of the west was not met immediately, an outcry went up against federal injustices. He further chided westerners for being the authors of much of the bad publicity emerging about the west. (Canada, Senate, *Debates* 1896, p. 111).

[25] *Edmonton News*, 28 May 1896; *Lethbridge News*, 18 January 1894. Saunders did not advocate free trade as Wood did, but argued that tariff barriers should be substantially lowered.

[26] *Calgary Herald*, 15 March 1895. The *Herald* continued to experience financial difficulties and management changes were frequent during the early 1890's. The Davis-Lougheed group sold out to Wesley Orr and J.A. Reid in 1892; they in turn passed the paper on to a group led by C.A. Magrath and the *Herald*'s original publisher T.B. Braden in 1894. This group quickly sold out the same year to J.J. Young who contibuted a measure of stability to the paper by maintaining his control of the company until 1904. C.A. Haydon, "The Romance of the Calgary Herald," in *The Story of the Press*, (Battleford: Canada Northwest Historical Publications, vol. 1, no. 4, part 1, 1928), p. 52.

[27] The number of homestead entries in the district provide one indication of the slow rate of growth in the district. In 1891, 784 entries were recorded, while in 1895, that number had increased to only 953. D. Diller, "Early Economic Growth in Alberta," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1923), p. 129.

[28] P.N. Voisey, "The Urbanization of the Canadian Prairies 1871-1916," *Social History*, vol. 8, no. 15, 1975, p. 83.

[29] A.A. den Otter, "Alexander Galt and the Northwest: A Study in Frontier Entrepreneurialism," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1974), p. 306.

[30] Even after finally getting a railway, Macleod could not enjoy the benefits of rail transportation. When the C. and E. railway reached the town in 1892, it was decided by the company to establish its own townsite almost three miles from the existing town. The struggle between the two Macleods went on until 1897 when the Crow's Nest Pass line was built and its station was situated in the original town. (Macleod Gazette, 16 June 1899.)

[31] Edmonton Bulletin, 2 June 1896. Oliver made this demand an important part of his election platform.

[32] den Otter, op. cit., p. 154-55.

[33] Lethbridge News, 18 May 1892.

[34] Ibid., 15 March 1894.

[35] E.A. Mitchner, "William Pearce and Federal Government Activity in Western Canada 1882-1904," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), p. 221.

[36] D.H. Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier 1875-1922," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972), p. 97.

[37] Diller, op. cit., p. 129-30.

[38] PAC, Sir John A. Macdonald papers, H.A. Young to Donald Smith, 12 February 1891.

[39] GAI, J.C.F. Bown papers, J. Livingston to Bown, 18 September 1892.

[40] Ibid., E.T. Saunders to Bown, 5 January 1893. Saunders could not come because he could not sell his printing presses in Lethbridge.

[41] Ibid., R.P. Pettipiece to W. Fielders, 4 May 1893.

[42] Ibid., Edmonton Liberal-Conservative Association to Mackenzie Bowell, 1 March 1895.

[43] Macleod Gazette, 30 January 1895. Wood had complained in January that political organization was extremely difficult because of the uncertainly over division.

[44] Edmonton News, 31 October 1895.

[45] Canada, House of Commons, Debates 1896, p. 6111-6112. There was some justification for hope of division. In April of 1896, T.M. Daly, Minister of the Interior, had introduced a motion for the division of Alberta at a line just south of Innisfail. Unfortunately, the bill was killed on the floor of the House by the Liberal filibuster which prevented its further consideration.

[46] D.E. Brown, "A History of the Cochrane Area," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1951), p. 41.

[47] GAI, Wesley F. Orr papers, Orr to D.W. Davis, 5 April 1896; Orr to D.W. Davis, 1 April 1896. Orr urged Davis to run against Cochrane for the good of the party, but also wanted to be appointed district returning officer, promising to pay Davis half the salary he (Orr) received, and proposing that the expenses be padded by at least 50% to make the deal more profitable.

[48] Macleod Gazette, 21 December 1894.

[49] Canada, Senate, Debates 1894, p. 161; 1893, p. 162.

[50] Lethbridge News, 27 April 1896. Saunders complained that Lougheed had served the interests of Calgary to the exclusion of the rest of the district.

[51] Ibid., 9 January 1895. Saunders identified this group in early January.

[52] Ibid. Cochrane was put forth as an Independent-Conservative. This move was probably in response to Oliver's claim that he was an Independent-Liberal.

[53] Ibid., 27 February 1895.

[54] Ibid. The basis for representation was to be 10 delegates per association with the provision for 1 delegate per 20 association members over and above the standard 10 delegates.

[55] Macleod Gazette, 8 March 1895.

[56] Ibid., 1 March 1895.

[57] Edmonton News, 21 March 1895.

[58] Macleod Gazette, 15 March 1895.

[59] Orr papers, Orr to J.S. Freeman, 10 March 1895.

[60] Ibid., Orr to D.W. Davis, 29 March 1896.

[61] Calgary Herald, 6 March 1895.

[62] Calgary Tribune, 7 March 1895.

[63] Ibid.

[64] Macleod Gazette, 15 March 1895.

[65] Orr papers, Orr to J.S. Freeman, 10 March 1895.

[66] Bown papers, J.R. Costigan to J.J. Edmiston (n.d.)

[67] Ibid., Saunders to Dr. H.C. Wilson, 4 March 1895.

[68] Ibid., Wood to Edmiston, 5, 7, 8 March 1895.

[69] Ibid., J.B. Smith to C.M. Woodsworth, 9 March 1895.

[70] Lethbridge News, 27 March 1895.

[71] Macleod Gazette, 22 March 1895.

[72] Lethbridge News, 6 March 1895.

[73] Ibid., 27 March 1895.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Macleod Gazette, 22 March 1895.

[76] W.S. Waddell, "The Honorable Frank Oliver," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1950), p. 249.

[77] Lethbridge News, 6 March 1896.

[78] Ibid., 8 April 1896.

[79] Calgary Herald, 25 March 1896.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid., 17 May 1896. C.O. Card threw his support solidly behind the Conservatives as he had done in 1891. It seems that one of the major reasons for this support was the influence C.A. Magrath had with the Mormon community. A.G. Wilcox, "The Founding of the Mormon Community in Alberta," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1950), p. 102.

[82] Macleod Gazette, 15 May 1896. Macleod and Pincher Creek both sent 5 delegates, while Lethbridge sent 4.

[83] It seems doubtful that Cochrane could have manipulated the convention in his favor. There were simply too many old-line Conservatives who were suspicious of his motives. Thus Wesley Orr assured Davis that nothing similar to the 1895 Cochrane convention would be tolerated in 1896, saying: "I tell you we will fight hard to prevent the ambushing that was done last year from being repeated." Orr papers, Orr to Davis, 29 March 1896.

[84] Lethbridge News, 1 April 1896. Saunders urged Magrath to stand as an Independent-Conservative "Who would prefer the interests of Alberta to the interests of any party." Magrath's withdrawal from the campaign was possibly the result of pressure from the Galt Company. The Company

forced him to resign his Territorial seat in 1898 to concentrate on Company affairs, and it is reasonable to suspect they would have been even less willing to have Magrath in Ottawa. Hobart-Mitchell Store Correspondence, Haultain to Hillyard Mitchell, 23 September, File no. 18, F.W.G. Haultain Correspondence.

[85] Calgary Herald, 17 May 1896.

[86] Lethbridge News, 20 May 1896.

[87] Macleod Gazette, 1 May 1896.

[88] Bown papers, T.M. Daly to H.H. Robertson, 24 December 1895.

[89] Calgary Herald, 17 May 1896.

[90] Calgary Tribune, 15 August 1894.

[91] Lethbridge News, 20 May 1896. This may have been the result of the death of Alexander Galt in 1893. Galt had been a staunch Conservative and a close friend of Macdonald.

[92] Macleod Gazette, 1 May 1896.

[93] Bown papers, T.M. Daly to Bown, 15 February 1895.

[94] The demands of the Edmonton Conservative Association for division of the district and the conversion of Pettipiece to the Oliver camp seem to indicate that the Conservatives of the north viewed the campaign from a sectional vantage point. W.S. Waddell further points out that many northern Conservatives voted for Oliver "above the dictates of party." W.S. Waddell, op. cit., p. 248.

[95] Edmonton News, 21 May 1896; 18 June 1896.

[96] Calgary Herald, 30 May 1896.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Edmonton Bulletin, 2 June 1896.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Calgary Tribune, 7 March 1895.

[101] Calgary Herald, 22 June 1896.

[102] Edmonton News, 11 June 1896.

[103] Lethbridge News, 17 June 1896.

[104] It appears that Hugh John possessed few of his father's incredible political abilities, and was used as a campaign figurehead

only because of his father's name. L.C. Clarke, "A History of the Conservative Administrations, 1891-1896," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Toronto, 1968), p. 490.

[105] In 1895, Lougheed had suggested that Dr. Lafferty be "bought off" with the position of Mounted Police Surgeon in Calgary. Lougheed felt this post "would prevent him from becoming an active factor in the coming elections, and would necessarily tie his hands . . .." (PAC, Mackenzie Bowell papers, Lougheed to Bowell, 13 May 1895.) In light of Lafferty's subsequent influence on the 1896 campaign, it was unfortunate for the Alberta Conservative party that Lougheed's suggestion was not heeded.

[106] Calgary Herald, 24 June 1896.

[107] Macleod Gazette, 26 June 1896.

[108] Lethbridge News, 24 June 1896.

[109] Calgary Herald, 24 June 1896.

[110] Edmonton News, 25 June 1896.

[111] Bown papers, Cochrane to H.H. Robertson, 3 August 1896. Even Cochrane's departure was accompanied by dissension within the Conservative party. He left owing the Edmonton Association over $1,000 which he refused to pay, claiming that other monies he had sent had been used for illegitimate election purposes. His action resulted in an angry series of letters between H.H. Robertson of Edmonton and G.S. McCarter, Cochrane's lawyer in Calgary and a prominent Conservative himself. There is no evidence indicating the dispute was ever successfully settled. Ibid., H.H. Robertson to G.S. McCarter, 1 August 1896; G.S. McCarter to Robertson, 8 August 1896.

CHAPTER IV

REORGANIZATION AND REAPPRAISAL
1896 - 1904

The years following the 1896 election saw major changes in the political scene in Alberta and the west generally. Recovery from the world-wide depression brought with it massive western immigrantion. This in turn drastically altered the make-up of the western electorate. With the new wave of population also came new needs and concerns on the part of westerners. Certainly old issues like the need for federal monies for western development continued to be factors in western politics, but the change in population spelled the decline of the influence of the ranching community in Alberta and the corresponding rise in the importance of the north *vis-à-vis* the south. This meant the Alberta Conservative party which had traditionally represented the south and the ranching community faced the necessity of broadening its appeal.

To generalize even further, the whole climate of the west changed after 1896. The last four years of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth were expansive and booming when compared to the pre-1896 depression period. The Liberals presided over this new prosperity, which was in stark contrast to the economic gloom which had reigned over the Conservative administration. National economic well-being produced political successes for the Laurier government and the Conservative party was defeated in two successive elections during the period.

More than anything, the Conservatives spent the eight years from 1896 to 1904 searching for some method to counteract the public's association of the Liberal party with prosperity. They changed leadership and changed policies, but all to little avail. This national dilemma was also faced in Alberta where the Conservatives faced first the necessity of recovering from the shock of defeat, and then the arduous task of reconstructing the shattered Alberta party.

Thus, following the 1896 election, western Conservatives were placed in a situation they had never before experienced. Not only had the Conservative candidate in the district been defeated, but the Tory government itself had been pu[illegible]ed from power by the Liberals.

As has been seen, western politics at the federal level were a continuous tight-rope act between the desire to elect a supporter of the government on the one hand, and the need to express the genuine political sentiments of the west on the other. In past elections Davis had associated himself closely with the Conservative government. Thus a vote for Davis was represented as a vote for the developmental policies of the Conservatives. A Liberal vote was a wasted vote, and carried with it the threat of being ignored by the government.

In 1896 despite the obvious problems resulting from Cochrane's candidacy, the south had made the fateful decision to remain Conservative. If western politics were merely a game of expediency, the gamble had not paid off, and in their post-election analysis of the contest, district Conservative papers betrayed a definite uneasiness regarding the future of the south in regards to the new Liberal government.[1]

This uneasiness was not confined solely to politics. The ranching community also expressed a certain anxiety over the attitude of the

Liberals to the cattle industry. The ranchers had been linked very closely to the Conservative party and associated the Liberals with settlement interests; they therefore viewed the change in government as potentially harmful to their investment.[2]

There was definitely cause for apprehension. In 1896, the closed lease system was phased out and the ranchers were faced with Frank Oliver as the new Alberta MP. Oliver had been anything but a strong supporter of ranchers in the past and had expressed opposition to several aspects of the Conservatives' ranching legislation.[3] Not only did Oliver pose a threat to the ranchers, but also to those federal bureaucrats who had been friends of the ranching industry. In 1887, he attempted to have A.M. Burgess and William Pearce, both long-time supporters of ranching interests, removed from power, but succeeded only in having them demoted.[4]

Repercussions of the Liberal victory were felt by Conservative officeholders as well. The Liberals, long starved for patronage, began soon after their election to reward their workers with positions formerly occupied by loyal Conservatives. The change was not wholesale, but nevertheless affected many Tories both prominent and unimportant. In June of 1897, Dr. N.J. Lindsay, president of the Calgary Conservative Association, was dismissed from his position as Police surgeon and replaced by the equally prominent Liberal Dr. Lafferty. At the other end of the scale, the popular but politically insignificant caretaker of the Cave and Basin at Banff, James Walker, suffered the same fate as Lindsay.[5]

District papers were also affected by the shift in government advertising from Conservative to Liberal organs. This caused the Herald a good deal of financial difficulty and prompted it to complain self-righteously in 1897:

> The Herald as the leading organ of the district has always been selected the the Government as the medium for publication of public notices.[6]

The election produced a two-fold reaction on the part of district Conservatives which well indicates the tension between development and party politics in the west. Naturally, the defeat brought forth calls for the re-organization of both the district and national parties. In October 1896, E.T. Saunders stressed that the party should regroup along reformist lines, advocating inclusion of an elective Senate and civil service reforms as planks of the party.[7]

Competing with the move for re-organization was the necessity of wrenching some measure of development aid from the Liberal government, and the real fear that voting Conservative had jeopardized the interests of the south with the Liberals.[8] This combination of fear and need resulted in a down-playing of party differences and a stress being laid on development. Thus Saunders wrote that southern Conservatives should

> confine their political energies to securing the development of the west which will inevitably result in increasing our political influence.[9]

In this struggle between partyism and development, it was development which won out. As in previous elections, party lines became visible only at election time, and in the interval tended to be submerged by the continuous cries for government aid.

In March 1897, a Conservative convention was held in Regina to form a Dominion Advisory Board in the west. Both Senator Lougheed and C.C. McCaul of Lethbridge were appointed, but the move produced little concerted organization.[10] This only bore out Saunders complaint of the previous month that it was much too soon to set about party organization.[11]

The Regina convention was followed by a meeting of the Territorial Association on December 31, also in Regina. This was to have been an attempt to organize local associations at the constituency level; a major departure from the existing pattern of local associations, but so little interest was expressed in the meeting that a quorum of the Territorial Executive could not be formed, and those members present were forced to mail the suggested organizational changes out to absent Executive members.[12]

Of much more immediate and lasting importance to Conservative papers in the district was the construction of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway. The CPR had purchased the Galt's charter to build the road in 1893, but construction had been delayed until the spring of 1897. In the eyes of southern papers, the Pass Railway was the first acid test of the Liberal government's attitude toward the south. The Herald expressed pessimism over the government's ability to wring concessions from the CP over rates and running rights, while Lethbridge mayor W.H. Bentley went scurrying to Ottawa in April 1887 to plead that the line not bypass the town.[13] In Macleod, Wood urged that the CPR construct the road, emphasizing that the Company was the only firm capable of finishing the project.[14]

The successful completion of the railway by the CPR in October 1898, and the rate reductions gained by the government, did much to dispel fears that the Liberals would sacrifice the interests of the south to the CPR, or discriminate against the south for voting against the government.[15]

Macleod certainly benefitted from completion of the line, and with the commencement of its construction, Wood was quick to express his appreciation to everyone associated with the deal; the CPR, Frank Oliver and the government.[16] In fact, the railway had served to stimulate the little town's flagging economy, and had rekindled its metropolitan ambitions. Thus Wood predicted the brightest of futures for the town in July 1897 saying:

> Macleod is destined to be not only a divisional point, but the most important point between Winnipeg and the west coast.[17]

Other evidence was also given by the Liberals that its western development program would not overlook the south. In August 1896 Saunders had listed government creameries and cold storage plants as being among the prime needs of the district.[18] A year and a half later, a government creamery was established at Calgary.[19]

Much of the government's interest and aid was attributed to the influence of Frank Oliver, and coupled with his support for immigration and his opposition to the reduction in North West Mounted Police Force levels, satisfaction was expressed with the Edmonton MP. In 1898, Saunders lauded Oliver as "a man who had the courage to maintain what he believes to be in the interests of the people . . . ."[20]

In this light, construction of the irrigation project in the south merely provided another example of the government's active participation in the affairs of the district. Follwing the election, C.A. Magrath went to Ottawa to endeavor to get some measure of government aid for the project. Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton was very obliging, and promised government subsidies totalling $48,000 for construction of the works. The next stage in the project was an agreement signed between the Galt Company and the Mormon community which secured the Saints as laborers and contractors in the undertaking. In return for their work the Mormons were to be paid half in cash and half in land. Construction of the main canal running northeast from the international boundary to a point near Lethbridge began in August 1898 and was finished in July 1900.[21]

Support for Oliver and certain aspects of the government's policies was one thing; approval of all the Liberal's actions was quite another. In the case of three specific issues, the Conservative press of the district were constant and vehement critics of the Laurier government. The first was the issue of North West Police Force reductions. Such reductions had been advocated first by the Liberals in 1892, and had very nearly been enacted by the Conservatives.[22] Following their election victory the Liberals reduced the 750 man Force by one third to provide a police force for the Yukon.[23]

Adverse reaction to the federal government's action was predictable. In April of 1897, Wood raised the spectre of an Indian uprising which was made probable by the troop reduction.[24] The News added its voice to the opposition, pointing out that the Force had a good deal of respect in the west, something which could not be equalled by any western militia force proposed to fill the gap left by the departing mounties.[25] J.J. Young criticized the move on political as well as practical grounds, complaining that the Liberals had always been parsimonious in their attitude to western expenditures, citing the Force reduction as a rather disastrous example of this trait.[26]

A second issue was the problem of the overland route to the Klondike which arose in the summer of 1897. The discovery of gold in the north and the possibility of reaching the area by the difficult and dangerous overland trail via Edmonton prompted much interest in Alberta.

It was felt that if the government could move quickly to build such a route, the district might cash in on the provisioning trade. It was even hoped that prospective settlers could be convinced to settle in Alberta rather than risk their savings in the north.[27]

Calgary was the starting point of the route by virtue of being on the CPR mainline and the initial station of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway as well. Thus it was largely from Calgary and Edmonton that demands were heard for federal construction of a connection between Alberta and the Klondike. In fact, the government had considered the possibility of building such a road, but had discarded it as too expensive.[28] This decision proved a blow to Calgary's ambition to extend its metropolitan influence even to the Yukon, and caused J.J. Young to lament in February 1898 that the government had lost yet another opportunity to attract settlers to the west.[29]

Probably the issue upon which the government received most of its criticism was the tariff. Conservative papers in Alberta made tariff reductions on agricultural implements a priority among the needs of the district.[30] When it became apparent that the Liberal government was not prepared to significantly lower tariff barriers, the government was vigorously condemned for its failure to meet its pre-election promises.[31]

Although there was certainly criticism of the Liberal government, it was not as vehement as it might have been expected given the Conservatives' fall from power. This was partly due to the aforementioned tension between party politics and the need for development, but in large measure was the result of the prosperity that began to smile on the district in 1897. At the end of that year, the Calgary Herald contentedly summed up the progress made over the previous twelve months saying:

> We who have made our homes in Alberta and who have believed in the future during the lean years may now feel no cause for regret. Our cattle export trade is no longer in doubt; our industrious farmers have found a home market for their produce, our merchants are doing good business . . . .[32]

The west was entering an era of prosperity and good times which was to last over a decade and result in the establishment of a strong profitable agricultural industry which replaced the subsistence farming that preceeded it. Alberta's population more than doubled from 1895 to 1901 when it stood at 73,022.[33] The ranching industry also profited from this boom, but affluence was a double-edged sword for the ranchers. With the lifting of the depression, the south came in for its share of settlement. Those settlers familiar with dryland farming techniques began to compete with the ranchers for land, and by 1905 had made the ranching community in the south a minority which in turn resulted in a comparable reduction in the political influence of the ranchers.[34] This rural expansion affected urban growth as well. Calgary's population rose from 4,389 in 1901 to 43,740 in 1911, while Lethbridge expanded from 2,072 to 8,050 during the same period.[35]

The growth of the district's population was so rapid that it seemed to have caught Territorial politicians unawares. Responsible government had been granted in the fall of 1897, but it was still necessary for the Territories to apply to Ottawa for annual grants. These grants habitually fell far short of the needs of the west. By 1898 the need for rapid provision of services and the inadequate funds available for development resulted in an expression of dissatisfaction with the Haultain administration and demands for a wholesale change in the membership of the Territorial Assembly.

In October 1898, the Lethbridge News criticized the Territorial government for not being "progressionist," urged the taxing of large cattle companies and ranchers to provide for school improvements and suggested that "the return of some vigorous men . . . to the Assembly would be of great advantage."[36] The Herald, in March 1897, criticized Haultain for being uncommunicative about the state of the public accounts;[37] and the following June opposed his attempt to alter the brand ordinance.[38] Young noted that of Alberta's ten Territorial members, fully one half were unsatisfactory and urged Albertans "to go down and tell the rural members of E. Assiniboia clearly what the ranching community wants."[39]

What Young wanted was not merely the maintenance of the existing brand ordinance, but the erection of Alberta as a separate province, and this was really the key to his opposition to Haultain. Calgary had been the centre of the autonomy movement since its inception in the late 1880's. Now that autonomy seemed near, Premier Haultain had adopted the stance that the Territories should be erected into one large province. This Young and many other Calgarians could not countenance. As far as the Herald was concerned, Albertans were "unyieldingly opposed to a Provincial Government for the whole Territories."[40] This outlook was shared by Senator Lougheed who had dabbled in the autonomy movement in 1891, and who, in an interview in Winnipeg in May 1897, firmly stated that:

> Mr. Haultain's move to enlarge the powers of the Territorial Assembly is looked upon with universal disfavor. Alberta as a whole wants a complete and clear severance from the Eastern portion of the Territories. They would prefer union with B.C. to her present condition.[41]

In Lethbridge and Macleod there was little enthusiasm for autonomy. Both towns suspected that Calgary's support for provincial status was largely based on her desire to become provincial capital, and thus their opposition was an outgrowth of the metropolitan rivalries which had long plagued the district. A second reason for their lack of enthusiasm for autonomy was the fact that Premier Haultain, whose position on autonomy was clearly opposed to that advocated by Calgary, enjoyed greater support in the south than he did in Calgary. Nevertheless, despite their opposition to autonomy, even Lethbridge and Macleod expressed the desire for some kind of independence from the eastern portion of the Territories. It was felt that the Assembly favored the eastern farmers over the ranching and mining country of Alberta and Western Assiniboia, and thus in January 1897, Saunders advocated that when provincial status eventually came about, Eastern Assiniboia should be taken in by a western extension of Manitoba and the remaining western portion of the Territories be created a single province.[42] Wood's solution to the problem of the differing interests of the eastern and western portions of the Territories was less radical and more in line with Haultain's position. He proposed that legislation relating to a certain area of the Territories be made applicable only to that area.[43]

Autonomy and dissatisfaction with some of Alberta's sitting members became the major issue of the Territorial elections held in November 1898. In fact, the 1898 contest marked a turning point in Territorial politics for several reasons. Responsible government had given the Assembly a responsible executive, but had withheld financial powers that would have given the Territories _de facto_ provincial status.[44] This meant the question of autonomy remained to be settled and there were several opinions as to the number of new provinces that were to be created. The defeat of the Conservatives federally had turned the attention of many local Tories to the Territorial Assembly where at least the Premier was a Conservative. As well, the need for development coupled with the Assembly's new competence made it a target for the demands of rural and urban municipalities for aid. These factors in addition to the dissatisfaction expressed with certain of Alberta's MLA's made the election an opportune time to enter the field of Territorial politics.

The opportunity was not lost on a young New Brunswick lawyer who had arrived in Calgary a year earlier. R.B. Bennett had been plucked from his law practice in Chatham in 1896 by Senator Lougheed who was looking for a junior partner for his prestigious law firm.[45] Bennett was brilliant, if somewhat single-minded, and vain. He was also a staunch Conservative, a fact he made very apparent upon his arrival in Calgary.[46] In fact, he so impressed local Conservatives that he was urged to stand in West Calgary for the Territorial Assembly.[47]

His star was rising quickly. Too quickly for the Herald, which objected not only to the fact that Bennett, though obviously able, was a "new man" when many good old-timers were around, but also to his rather pompous manner which was not "all that westerners could desire . . . ."[48] Bennett was running in a three cornered race with Conservative James Muir and Liberal W.W. Stewart. He campaigned extensively throughout the constituency on a platform of provincial autonomy with Calgary as the capital, railway competition to destroy monopolies like the CPR, and aid to western irrigation.[49] To the surprise of the Herald and certainly of Muir and Stewart, Bennett won by a majority of over 100 votes.[50] This victory convinced even J.J. Young that Bennett was a "going concern," and he predicted that the young MLA "would in time exert an influence in the House second only to that wielded by Mr. Haultain and Mr. Ross."[51]

Elsewhere in the district the result of the election was significant for another reason. Four of the ten sitting members were defeated, a fact which certainly bore out the criticisms of Young and Wood. With the exception of Bennett's defeat of the incumbent James Muir, the other three seats were won by Liberals at the expense of sitting Conservatives. Of particular note was the defeat of R.G. Brett by A.L. Sifton in Banff.[52] Both these men had been vitally active in federal election and Brett's loss to Sifton caused the News to speculate that "it would not be surprising if before the life of the new Assembly expires an effort were made to draw party lines on the basis of Dominion politics."[53]

Despite fears that the 1898 election might become a strictly party fight, it appears that party lines were kept well out of the contest in most constituencies. As yet there was little support for partyism in the Assembly and the Herald reported with some sense of relief that in Edmonton, Victoria, Red Deer and High River, sectional conflicts had been the most contentious issues.[54]

The Territorial election marked a watershed in political activity for district Conservatives. Prior to November 1898 there had been little interest in political organization, following the election, however, things began to pick up. In January Conservative leader Sir Charles Tupper wrote Regina MP Nicholas Flood Davin saying that an election was probable in the fall of 1899, and noting that the prospects seemed favorable.[55] In mid-February, Saunders also wrote that the future seemed bright for the Conservatives.[56]

In line with the new optimism that had come about partly as a result of provincial elections in Ontario and Quebec which saw the party gain ground, the federal government came in for much more criticism than it had before 1898.[57] Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton in particular came in for more than his share of abuse. Saunders castigated him for failing to provide a land registry in Macleod and wrote, "Mr. Sifton would certainly be more popular if he studied the needs of the west more and his theoretical focus a little less."[58] J.J. Young slammed the government's immigration policy for providing aid for the emigration of "filthy Galicians" while refusing assistance to British and eastern Canadian immigration.[59]

Indications did point to an imminent election. In July 1889, the Lethbridge Liberal Association formed with Dr. L.G. de Veber at its head.[60] The Conservatives did not follow this lead as quickly, but in September Young predicted an election in the near future and pressed the need to organize on district Conservatives.[61] Clifford Sifton had been in the district in September to open a section of the irrigation project and do a little practical politicking with his brother.[62] To counter this influence Calgary Conservatives pressed Tupper to speak in Alberta.[63] The national leader was planning a two week flying visit to B.C., but agreed to speak in Calgary and Macleod in late November 1899 on his way to the coast.[64]

Organization was to prove much less a stumbling block than selection of a candidate. It was obvious that the difficulties of 1896 had to be avoided, but the question was how. The south wanted a candidate it had approved of, one who would not merely be put up by the Calgary

Association at the expense of the rest of the district. But there were few men of prominence in the south who could be expected to carry the district outside of the ranching community. Two such men were Haultain and C.A. Magrath, but Magrath was closely bound up in the irrigation project, and had only recently resigned from the Territorial cabinet because of pressure from the Galt Company, and Haultain seemed busier than ever with Territorial matters.[65] Even before they were offered the southern nomination, both announced their decision not to stand.[66] This left a vacuum in the south which no other southern politician could fill, and opened the way for the Calgary Association to put forth their own candidate.

Two weeks after the withdrawal of Haultain and Magrath, the Calgary Association held an organizational meeting. Dr. G.A. Ings was elected president, R.J. Hutchings first vice-president, and E. Doughty secretary. R.B. Bennett was one of two men appointed to be recruiters.[67] At this time there was no real indication of who would be the Calgary candidate, but Bennett had been making a name for himself with his attacks against Haultain in the Assembly, and during February and March of 1900 had travelled extensively around his own constituency.[68]

District Conservatives finally met in April to organize a permanent association and to agree upon the basis of representation for the district convention. President of the new District Association was Dr. Ings of Calgary, first vice-president was O. Bush of Strathcona, second vice-president was W.H. Henderson of Lethbridge, secretary was C.F. Harris of Macleod and the treasurer was R.J. Hutchings of Calgary. After "three of four hours of wrangling" the formula for representation at the nominating convention was finally settled. Calgary received ten delegates and the vote of president Ings, incorporated towns received five delegates, while villages and rural associations were granted three delegates. Pincher Creek and Cardston came in for special consideration, and were assigned four representatives each. In addition to this there was to be one delegate per twenty-five association members. The basis for representation had apparently been the result of a compromise between the north and south, and editor Young wrote hopefully that the forthcoming July convention would

> have the result of cementing the various factions of the Conservative party throughout Alberta and satisfy all grounds of complaint from different sections of the country which were likely caused by the failing of the Conservative candidate here four years ago.[69]

Any hopes that the convention would represent a grand reconciliation between Calgary and the south were soon dashed however. Six days before the convention was to begin, Saunders announced that no Lethbridge delegates would attend. He complained that at the organizational meeting held on April 25, Lethbridge's delegate, W.H. Henderson had been given to understand that the next district convention would be held in Lethbridge, and this promise had obviously been broken. He further complained that the south was not given sufficient delegates and that the notice of the convention was too short.[70] Given the fact that Lethbridge Conservatives had been aware since early May of the date of the convention, it seems that Saunders' real cause for complaint was that the town was passed over as the site for the convention and that the south had received too few delegates.

In Macleod, local Conservative president, C.F. Harris had also been present at the April 25 meeting, and he too objected to the basis of representation of the July convention, arguing that the south had been insufficiently represented.[71]

The upshot of this agitation was that when the convention finally met, southern delegates were noticeably absent, although fifty Conservatives from other points outside Calgary were present. Despite the lack of southern representation, six candidates were nominated: Bennett, Haultain, Dr. Brett, N.D. Beck of Edmonton, O. Bush of Strathcona and A.E. Cross of Calgary. All withdrew except Bennett and Haultain, but the actual election of a candidate was delayed until the expected arrival of the southern contingent which, of course, did not happen.[72]

When Haultain wired his withdrawal for both personal and business reasons, Bennett who was waiting in the wings at Banff was informed of the result.[73] It must have been both frustrating and perplexing for him. He was the only candidate left in the field, and the choice of the whole district outside of the south, but the recalcitrance of the ranching district prevented him from becoming the official candidate. In fact the south had been somewhat cool toward Bennett throughout his term in the Territorial Assembly. Wood saw him as a verbose disrupter of the House, and rankled especially at his attacks against Premier Haultain.[74]

The disastrous example of what the alienation of the south could mean for a candidate had been made abundantly evident in 1896, and so when C.F. Harris called for a southern Conservative convention, Bennett wisely decided to submit his name to it for ratification.[75]

The southern convention met on September fifth in a rebellious mood. R.J. Hutchings had been sent to soothe the anger of the south, but his presence did not prevent Harris, who chaired the gathering, from complaining that the south had been unfairly treated at the Calgary convention. As a conciliatory move, Hutchings nominated Harris, Harris, though realizing the futility of the move, followed by nominating Haultain who wired his automatic withdrawal. The drama finished with Harris withdrawing in favor of Bennett and the selection of the Calgary convention being made unanimous by the south.[76]

Despite this waltzing around the selection of a candidate, both the Calgary and Macleod conventions had managed some concrete organizational moves. In Calgary, the district had been divided into north, south and central portions with an executive committee of five in each.[77] In Macleod, a permanent southern Alberta Association was formed with Harris as president. The existence of this permanent organization was thought to ensure some measure of autonomy to the south, causing the Gazette to exclaim triumphantly,

> should the Conservatives be successful at the approaching elections, the patronage of our part of the country will be distributed on the advice of local men . . ..[78]

Perhaps the most startling change in district organization had come about quite unexpectedly however. With large scale immigration came many western Conservatives to provide new blood to the rank of local associations which had remained relatively constant since 1887. Of early Conservative stalwarts like A.R. Lucas, J.R. Costigan, T.W. Jackson, Dr. Lindsay and Joseph Millward, few remained. They had been replaced by younger men like Bennett, R.J. Hutchings and M.S. McCarthy.

Although politics may have become a young man's game, the appeal of the Conservative party was still strongest among the old time ranching elite. From the time of its foundation, the Alberta Conservative party had been the party of the southern ranching community, and most of the Alberta Tory elite had been drawn from that sector. Both Davis and Cochrane had had strong ranching connections, while Bennett's CPR affiliations had led him into contact with the ranching community many times. One had to look no further than the exclusive Ranchman's Club of Calgary to find evidence of the Conservative-rancher link. Prominent among the original members of the club were Senator Lougheed, Cochrane, Lethbridge Conservative C.C. McCaul and F.S. Stimson, a Conservative from the Macleod district.[79] When not representing some section of the ranching industry, Alberta Tories seemed drawn from the professions. Thus men like C.F.P. Coneybeare of Lethbridge, C.F. Harris of Macleod, J.R. Costigan, T.W. Jackson and P.J. Nolan of Calgary, and J.C.F. Brown of Edmonton were all lawyers, while both R.G. Brett and H.C. Wilson had served as Territorial Assemblymen, and were, in addition doctors.

The composition of the executive of the Alberta party certainly reflected the nature of Alberta in the 1880's and early 1890's. During this period it was the ranching community which formed the dominant social and economic elite in the district. Closely associated with this industry were those professions which were also rooted in the east and represented the upper class of both Ontario and Britain. Prior to 1896, this Conservative-rancher elite won two federal elections, but after the Liberals gained power and with the immigration of settlers whose backgrounds were radically dissimilar from those of the ranchers, the political influence of the ranching industry declined. Even the new blood the Conservatives brought into their ranks represented the upper class. Thus, the Conservative party remained, to its own detriment, the party of the ranching south.

This changing electoral composition had yet to manifest itself in the election results, however, and once Bennett had the south's stamp of approval, he set to campaigning with a will. His speaking skill was his greatest asset and was acknowledged by Liberals as well as Conservatives.[80] He kept his platform relatively simple, campaigning against the broken election promises of the Liberal administration, local corruption and abuses of patronage. At every meeting he attended, he asked his audience whether "a political party can break its pledges with impunity."[81]

Facing Bennett was Frank Oliver, the incumbent who had been unanimously nominated at a Liberal convention held in Calgary in August. Oliver centred his platform around his independent stance, his approval of the government's tariff scheme and his support for the government's policies for developing the west.[82]

Both candidates enjoyed strong organizations. Bennett had a representative permanent association behind him at the district level, and the three regional organizations which had been created at the Calgary convention. Oliver too had the support of a permanent association headed by district president A.L. Sifton, and in addition, the potent lever of patronage to apply where necessary. Bennett's chief party lieutenants were P.J. Nolan and Dr. Brett, both well acquainted with Territorial campaigns. Oliver relied mainly on A.L. Sifton for support.[83] The federal party also sent Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper to aid Bennett's campaign. He spoke several times in the district, attacking the corruption of both Laurier and Sifton.[84]

The election was set for November 7, and the course of the campaign was frantic. Both candidates travelled the length of the district several times, using the rail system extensively. Bennett spoke from the back of trains, in public halls and theatres and in one case, from the top of a threshing machine. He pummelled the government's tariff policy incessantly and played upon recent government scandals in the east.[85]

An interesting development in the campaign was the struggle between Bennett and Oliver for the labor vote. At a Calgary meeting for both candidates in late September, Oliver accused Bennett of having corporate sympathies by virtue of his being a CPR lawyer.[86] He further condemned Bennett for his opposition to the eight hour day legislation that had been passed in the Territorial Assembly in the spring session of 1899.[87]

The result of these accusations was a hurried series of meetings with labor representatives in Calgary and Lethbridge at which time both Bennett and Oliver attempted to secure the support of laborers. In Calgary, Bennett explained that his opposition to the legislation was based on the fact that miners doing piece work would have their wages seriously cut if their hours of work were strictly regulated, and he repeated this explanation four days later in Lethbridge.[88] Oliver met with Calgary labor representatives on October 21 and repeated his earlier charges against Bennett, making, the Herald accused, "a direct appeal to class prejudice and passion . . . ."[89] Bennett's explanation was apparently not well-received, however, and both the Gazette and the Edmonton Sun noted the Galt Company and its miners would vote against Bennett.[90]

A less desirable sidelight to the campaign was the appeal made by both sides to race prejudice. Bennett accused Oliver of cultivating the eastern European vote to the exclusion of British and American settlers, and asked Oliver to explain "how vastly superior as neighbors are dirty and ignorant Galicians to white settlers."[91] Oliver had in fact been on record as opposing Sifton's promotion of eastern European immigration, but rather than pointing out the abundant evidence to counter Bennett's accusations, he resorted to a racist slur of his own.[92] Late in the contest he stated that Bennett had naturalized several Chinese in Calgary to vote for him.[93] The election closed in a flurry of vindictiveness, each side accusing the other of sending false telegrams and publishing misleading reports of statements made by their candidates.

The results gave Oliver a solid margin of 1175 votes over Bennett. Of 135 polling stations, Bennett won only 45. While he naturally enjoyed his greatest support south of Innisfail, the northern boundary of his Territorial constituency, he was defeated outright in Lethbridge and most of the Mormon communities of the southwest. He was also decisively beaten in such mining towns as Blairmore, Canmore and Kananaskis, giving painful indication that the mining community as a whole rejected his position on the eight hour day.[94]

Neither Bennett nor the Herald were graceful in defeat. The Herald accused Oliver of using "every questionable influence" against Bennett, citing the manipulation of the eastern European and half-breed vote by immigration agents and scrip commissioners. J.J. Young noted bitterly:

> The north has once again triumphed over the south not withstanding the fact that Mr. Oliver's representation of the district,

> central Alberta has never received the slightest recognition or assistance from the Government.[95]

Bennett was also quick to raise the sectional cry, accusing Oliver's campaign workers of telling northern voters that his election would mean that Edmonton would be bypassed as provincial capital. He further complained that Oliver had bought sections of both the half-breed and Galician vote. Only as a secondary reason did he cite the general prosperity of the country as a cause of his loss.[96] Privately he was not happy with the lack of support he had received in the south, particularly from C.A. Magrath.[97]

The Gazette echoed the same sentiments as those of Bennett and the Herald. Editor Wood noted that during the course of the campaign, "Mr. Oliver developed an astonishing affection for the Galicians and Doukhobors . . . ."[98] Immediately preceding the election, Wood had also raised the sectional issue. He had explained that Oliver, if elected, would continue to attend to the interests of the north to the exclusion of those of the south. This would be particularly so, he noted, because division of the district was sure to come soon after the election, and Oliver would have no need of tending to the needs of the south.[99]

Only the Lethbridge News ignored both the racial and sectional issues of the campaign. Saunders simply attributed Oliver's victory to the general prosperity of the country.[100] Since Lethbridge had decisively rejected Bennett, it was unlikely Saunders would be quick to hurry to his defence at any rate. In fact, throughout the campaign, Saunders had been non-committal towards either candidate, expressing a rather jaundiced opinion of the ability of either men to materially affect the government's attitude towards the development of the south.

Thus he wrote in late October:

> Against Mr. Oliver we have nothing to say. Mr. Bennett is a new man and an untried man. We have no doubt that the interests of Alberta will be looked after to the best of their respective abilities whichever man be elected. But they are only one of a party, and the party will run the country.[101]

The election resulted in Tupper's resignation and yet another call for the re-organization of the party. But this was not merely a repeat of that which had been voiced in 1896. Alberta Conservatives demanded a review of the party's goals and tactics. J.J. Young felt that the new leader should be "clean" "popular" and "reliable." More important than these qualities, however, was "organizational skill." Young wrote that "the halcyon days of oratory have passed," and further complained "the truth is that the methods of the party are out of date."[102] C.E.D. Wood also pressed for a massive re-organization of the party, but laid more stress on the need for the new leader to be a man of the people saying: "The closer the party is in touch with the people, the greater its prospects of success . . . ."[103] The Lethbridge News said nothing of the need for the party to regroup. The paper was in fact leaning more towards independence than it had in previous years, and Saunders seemed disillusioned with politics at the federal level. Following the election he concentrated most of his attention on local questions, and commented very little on national politics.

In February 1901, the Conservatives elected a new national leader, R.L. Borden.[104] His selection did not produce much reaction in the district. Saunders said nothing at all, while Wood only commented on his performance as Leader of the Opposition after the 1901 spring session of the federal Parliament had finished.[105] The Herald naturally covered the matter more fully. Following Tupper's resignation, Young had called for a national convention to select a new leader, he mentioned both Borden and Joseph Fielding as possible candidates for leadership, commenting that Borden was young, but seemed able.[106] When Borden became leader without the benefit of a national convention however, Young was unhappy and spoke of Borden only in terms of his being a temporary leader.[107]

The Liberal victory brought a new wave of patronage much like that which had been seen after the 1896 election. In Lethbridge, Crown Prosecutor C.F.P. Coneybeare and Homestead Inspector J.R. Thompson, both strong Conservatives were dismissed, and their positions taken by Liberals.[108] Nevertheless, men like Coneybeare and Thompson were more able to recover from their hardship than were simple Conservative workers in relatively minor positions. A rather pathetic example of the affect the spoils systems had on such men was the case of Deane Freeman of Macleod. Freeman had been a customs official in Macleod for nineteen years, but was dismissed in June of 1900, apparently because his wife had some slight acquaintance with Lady Tupper. Soon after his dismissal, Freeman's wife died, and Freeman himself, unable to find a new job or support his large family, was forced to place his children in a Salvation Army shelter. To his own credit, Charles Tupper attempted to help Freeman as much as he could, writing to both Governor-General Minto and Haultain in unsuccessful attempts to have the man appointed to a new position.[109]

After the election, the issue of provincial autonomy came to the fore in both Territorial and national politics. Oliver favored giving increased powers to the Territories, although he was not prepared to support autonomy unless it was financially beneficial to the west.[110] Unlike Oliver, Senator Lougheed expressed his hearty support for autonomy, and in 1902 said:

> Public sentiment has asserted itself very strongly in favor of immediate action being taken with reference to this important matter.[111]

In January 1901, Premier Haultain wrote Minister of the Interior Sifton stating:

> The Territories have arrived at a point, where, by reason of their population and material development the larger powers and larger income of a Province have become necessary.[112]

Haultain met with the Laurier cabinet in October of 1901 over the matter, but received no specific assurances with regard to the granting of autonomy.[113] The urgent need for provincial status was primarily based upon financial need. The federal grant was far short of Territorial needs, and the discrepancy between the two was growing. In 1901, for example, the budget of the Territorial Department of Public Works stood at $250,000, while its real requirements were closer to $400,000.[114]

Support for provincial status was widespread in the west, but a more contentious problem was the exact form that the new province should take. Haultain felt one large province would be the most powerful, efficient unit of government and would avoid the costly duplication of government machinery that would be required if more than one province were created.[115] This sentiment ran counter to the opinions of many Albertans. Naturally, the centre of the opposition to one province was Calgary, and was led by R.B. Bennett.

Unlike Calgary, Lethbridge supported Haultain's one province scheme strongly. Saunders stressed in April 1902 that one province would be the most efficient unit from an economic point of view.[116] The Gazette, for its part advocated some form of separation of the ranching community from the agriculturalists to the east, but Wood was also quick to point out that Calgary's aspiration to become the new provincial capital was certainly a motive behind her desire for autonomy.[117]

The Territorial elections to be held in May 1902 provided a forum for the differing views on the shape of autonomy. In Alberta, twelve of the thirteen seats were being contested. In four of them, men specifically opposed to Haultain's one province stance were in the running. The remainder of the seats were contested by government supporters and independents. The result was a resounding victory for Haultain. Where they were faced by opposition candidates, government nominees won all but one of four contests, while they took nine out of the total number of seats in the district. Only Bennett in West Calgary was elected on a purely opposition ticket.[118] The result was similar throughout the Territories where most of the Territorial press and the great majority of the people were generally in favor of one province.[119]

Although Bennett's opposition to Haultain was ostensibly the result of his objection to Haultain's position regarding the number of provinces to be created with autonomy, it went deeper than that. Bennett was a thorough-going Conservative, and he did not leave his partisan loyalties outside of the door of the Territorial Assembly as did Haultain. The Premier seemed well able to balance his non-partisan stance in the Territorial House with his strong Conservatism in federal politics. Bennett was not quite so flexible, and could not understand Haultain's quick shifts from partisanship to independence. In fact he suspected Haultain's loyalty to the Conservative party, and his steadfast

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Conservatism dictated that he would oppose the Premier, Territorial autonomy or not.[120]

The dispute over whether the Territories should be divided into one or more provinces disturbed Haultain, for it divided the common western front demanding provincial status. Despite this conflict, the election returns at least proved he was riding the groundswell of public opinion over the matter, for Haultain had wanted to make the key election issue autonomy, and none of the candidates in any of the Territorial constituencies expressed their opposition to the policy.[121]

In 1902, Haultain received a surprising and not entirely welcome ally in the struggle--Robert Borden. Borden had stated in the Commons in 1902 that current Territorial grants were inadequate and that autonomy should be granted as quickly as possible to alleviate the situation.[122] He followed up these statements with an extended visit to the west, speaking in Alberta in late September. In Calgary he urged that autonomy be granted "at the earliest possible moment,"[123] and in Lethbridge he repeated this message along with a defence of the Conservative policy of protection.[124]

Borden's support for autonomy complicated the issue for Haultain. He desired the struggle to be a clean cut dispute between the Territories and the federal government. In becoming involved in the dispute as the Leader of the Opposition, Borden had introduced the possibility that autonomy would become a party issue, something Haultain had tried desperately to avoid.[125] Furthermore, because he was a Conservative himself, Haultain had to be very careful to avoid the impression that he and Borden were campaigning for provincial status together as Conservatives.

R.B. Bennett had no such conflicting loyalties to balance. Borden's statement gave him an opportunity to introduce party politics into the Territorial Legislature and put Haultain in the position of either rejecting the Conservative party in order to continue the non-partisan fight for autonomy, or moving away from independent politics and more firmly into the ranks of the Tories.[126]

Bennett's idea was to present a resolution to a Territorial Conservative convention proposing the introduction of party lines into the Assembly. He was positive the move had the widespread support among western Conservatives, and reasoned that if Haultain accepted the motion, he would be a powerful force in Conservative hopes of national re-election, but if he rejected it he would be isolated from the body of Territorial Conservatives who would then be free to organize for the upcoming federal campaign.[127]

There were several motives behind Bennett's plans, but the most important was his loyalty to the Conservative party. He felt that the Territorial Assembly could be used as an organizational base for the federal elections expected in either 1903 or 1904. This could not come about while it was officially non-partisan. Furthermore, with his ambition to become Prime Minister, he probably viewed the overthrow of Haultain as a stepping stone to that office.[128]

In late January 1903, at a local Conservative convention at Yorkton, Bennett first suggested the idea of a Territorial Conservative convention.[129] Borden accepted the recommendation and called for such a meeting on March 25 and 26 at Moose Jaw. Throughout February and March Bennett prepared for the gathering, he corresponded with each local association in the district, and several prominent members of the party outside of Alberta. He even forsook his beloved law practice to prepare for the convention.[130]

In his correspondence, he stressed that the convention was to be solely organizational preparation for the Dominion election. Writing to Senator Perley in February 1903, he explained the convention had been designed

> to make the party united and organized so that as soon as we know where the new constituencies are we may be able to assist in getting conventions called and candidates named.[131]

Bennett urged each local association to send five delegates to Moose Jaw, and promised sixty from Alberta.[132] Inevitably, there were problems with the selection of candidates. He had to patch up a local feud in the Macleod Association,[133] while in other areas like Wetaskawin it was an effort merely to get a local association formed.[134]

It was not until the format of the convention was securely established that Bennett turned his activities towards the more important task of dealing with Haultain. Writing to Dr. Cowan of Regina on March 10, he speculated about the probable support Haultain would muster at the convention. Bennett felt the Macleod delegates would back the Premier, but dismissed them because they were too few to materially affect the result. He also made his first mention of Haultain's expendability to the interests of party, noting:

> If it becomes necessary to hurt the feelings of Mr. Haultain or anybody else, that is a matter which cannot be helped. We will be there to protect the interests of our party in Federal affairs irrespective of other considerations.[135]

He had apparently gathered enough support among Territorial delegates to defeat Haultain in a straight vote over the party issue. It was now necessary to justify Haultain's removal to Borden. In a letter to the federal leader on March 10, Bennett made party loyalty his sole criterion for condemning Haultain. He noted the Premier had recently appointed three Liberal license commissioners while firing two good Conservatives at Yorkton, such action was incomprehensible to him and he finished by stressing:

> The assurances of fealty to a leader and loyalty to a party count in my judgement for very little when the visible evidence of that fealty and loyalty advances the interests of the opposing party.[136]

Bennett's decision to push Haultain out of the party if necessary alarmed Borden. In a hasty reply he urged Bennett to restrain those members of the party who had been attacking Haultain's non-partisan stance, emphasizing:

> Mr. Haultain is an able man and it would be extremely injudicious for us to drive him out of our party except for the most cogent reasons.[137]

The convention convened March 26 in Moose Jaw. It received a large amount of attention from the press, but the Conservatives media apparently had no inkling of Bennett's intentions. In March J.J. Young, replying to the Albertan's accusations that the convention had been specifically called to support the introduction of party lines into the Assembly, stated plainly that the convention was to be purely organizational, and that the party question was foreign to the Territorial House.[138]

One hundred and forty delegates were present, and Alberta sent a contingent of forty-two, somewhat less than the sixty Bennett had originally promised. The major work of the convention was done by the resolution committee of seventeen which included Bennett, Haultain, Young, T.A. Patrick, Senators Lougheed and Perley and R.S. Lake, a strong Haultain supporter. The committee considered and passed thirteen resolutions among which were demands for autonomy and a Hudson's Bay Railway. It was the eighth resolution which proved to be the most important however. Proposed by T.A. Patrick, it urged that the next Territorial election be fought on party lines. The proposal passed by a vote of thirteen to four against the opposition of Haultain, Lake and two others.[139] On the floor of the convention it received even greater support, passing by a majority of one hundred and thirteen.[140]

Bennett was triumphant, and immediately reported the result to Borden. He had, he noted happily, worked for four years to bring about the resolution. As to Haultain who had opposed the resolution on the floor of the convention as well as in the committee rooms, Bennett held no ill feelings. The Premier had simply been outmanoevered and outvoted and after realizing he could not persuade the delegates to reject the motion, he "acted the part of the very clever man that he is, . . ." and accepted the convention's verdict attaching the proviso that he could not be bound by it himself.[141]

When interviewed following the convention, Haultain was properly non-committal about the party lines resolution. He admitted he had voted against it, but stressed that he had always opposed partisan politics in the Assembly, noting:

> If I changed my position with regard to this question--which I have not--there would be only one course of action for me to follow, that is resign.[142]

Privately he was not quite so taciturn. He had in fact written Borden complaining of Bennett's attacks even before the convention. This protest had prompted Borden's letter to Bennett of March 19.[143] Both Haultain's protests and Borden's caution were obviously of little avail.

Bennett was quick to take advantage of the opportunity the party lines resolution afforded him to introduce partisan political activity into the Assembly. Time and time again, both he and Patrick opposed or proposed legislation on purely partisan grounds, and following the end of the spring session, he wrote boastfully to Borden that given the attitude and actions of both he and Patrick in the past session, he did not think it would be difficult to draw firm party lines in the Territories.[144]

The opportunities provided by the Moose Jaw convention were also not lost by the Liberals. Following the convention, G.H.V. Bulyea, Haultain's Commissioner of Public Works, resigned in protest against the Premier's apparent acquiesence in the introduction of party lines, although he returned to the cabinet shortly afterwards.[145] While publicly indignant, he was privately working with Assiniboia MP Walter Scott to secure a judgeship for Haultain in order to remove him from the political scene.[146] In fact, despite their histronics, one commentator has noted that after 1903, Territorial Liberals even came to approach the autonomy issue from a position of "careful partisan calculation."[147]

The Moose Jaw convention marked the beginning of political organization for both the Territorial election which was not expected for two or three years, and the start of the federal campaign. But when Conservatives faced the upcoming federal election, they faced it from a very different perspective than they had in the past. In late March, the federal government had finally passed a redistribution bill giving Alberta four seats.[148] Redistribution finally effected the separation of north and south so long demanded by Albertans. It further separated the Lethbridge-Macleod ranching district from Calgary. Thus in one move, the Liberals had solved two problems which had long been plaguing the district; sectionalism and metropolitan rivalries between Calgary and the south. Redistribution neatly divided the district into two halfs; the north was Liberal and the south Conservative. This move guaranteed the Liberals at least two seats in the federal election, and given the growing Liberal support in the southwest, the possibility of another.

The bill also drastically affected political organization in the district. The Alberta Association was subordinated to the four constituency executives. This was so much the case that in each of the four constituencies there was little interest in the campaigns of the others, much to the displeasure of Bennett who had been hoping for a more unified district organization.[149] But in view of the restraining bonds the district and Calgary associations had placed on both the north and south in past elections, this lack of communication is perhaps understandable.

With the election predicted for the fall of 1903, the usual calm of the summer was disturbed by active political organization and further shattered by volleys of abuse heaped upon the federal government by district Conservative papers. The Herald spent the summer criticizing the Liberals' tariff policies, advocating the benefit of protection, and predicting the Laurier administration would never grant autonomy.[150] C.E.D. Wood and the Gazette got off to a quick start after the Moose Jaw convention touting the advantages of protection and urging Canada to join in an Imperial preference system.[151] Despite this early activity, by June the Gazette fell very silent about political matters. In fact it was in serious financial trouble, and Wood was forced to sell his interest in the paper in late June. Control of the paper was purchased by George Scheer, owner of a Lethbridge dry goods store, and Scheer shocked the Gazette's usual readers by announcing his intentions to turn the paper into a Liberal organ.[152] This rather abrupt about face left only the News and Saunders as Conservative supporters in the south, but Saunders had been edging the paper towards a more independent stance since the election of 1900, and was not prepared to support any man merely on the basis of his party affiliations. Furthermore, by 1904, Saunders had been editor of the News for almost twenty years and was considering selling the paper and retiring.[153] Given these two factors, Saunders could not be counted upon to push the Conservative cause with any great degree of enthusiasm. With the absence of a strong Conservative organ in the south, the Herald became the only strong Tory paper remaining in the district. Viewed from this perspective, and given Oliver's popularity, it was fortunate indeed that division had taken place when it did.

Added to the changes caused by division and the alteration of the political climate after the Moose Jaw convention was the factor of immigration. From 1896 to 1900, settlement had continued to favor the north over the south.[154] However, beginning about 1902 with the Department of the Interior's advertisement of the benefits of dry land farming and coupled with the completion of the Galt Company's irrigation project, large numbers of immigrants, particularly Americans familiar with both irrigation and dry land farming, began to pour into the south.[155] For the period from 1900 to 1904, homestead entries indicate that the north held only a slight edge over the south in terms of immigrants with 15,189 as opposed to 12,825 entries.[156] While the majority of the newcomers were British or Americans, a significant number of Germans, French, Scandinavians and Ukrainians were arriving in the west, and these new immigrants were a political force whose influence on both Territorial and federal politics was as yet unknown.[157]

Conservatives in the ranching district of Alberta were the first to organize at a convention held in Macleod on September 1. They selected Pincher Creek rancher John Herron who defeated four other candidates for the nomination, among them W.C. Ives of Lethbridge.[158] Ives had been fighting political battles since 1883 when Lord Boyle had defeated him in a race for the Territorial Council. Herron was what the ranching country had been wanting since the retirement of Davis in 1896. He was an old-timer, having come to the west with the North West Mounted Police in 1874. He had served with the Force until 1877 when he returned to Ontario, only to come west again the following year. In 1881, he became manager of the Stewart cattle ranch near Pinchar Creek, a position he held until 1889 when he began ranching on his own.[159] He was neither a flamboyant man nor a strong orator, but Saunders commented that "he had a good level head and business capacity."[160]

His opposition was Malcolm Mackenzie, a Macleod storeowner who had been selected to represent the Liberals at a convention held in early January 1904 in Macleod.[161] It was to be expected that Mackenzie would enjoy the support of the recently converted Gazette, while Saunders would take an independent stance. However, Scheer had dramatically announced in early November that he was returning like the prodigal son to the folds of the Conservative party, claiming that he had only supported the Liberals because the men who had lent him the money to buy out Wood were Grits, and in return for the loan had exacted from him a promise to turn the Gazette into a government supporter. By November he had apparently either earned or been given the money to pay back his original creditors, and promised in the future "to devote this paper to spreading Conservative propaganda . . . ."[162]

Although Herron's selection went smoothly enough, Calgary had some difficulty in nominating a candidate. It was, in fact, rather ironic that after the feisty southern Conservatives had been removed from the picture, difficulty over the nomination should arise. On December 10, a convention had been called to select a candidate. Bennett was the natural choice, and when the delegates from the eighteen local associations assembled he, along with Dr. Brett and J.J. Young were nominated. Brett and Young withdrew in favor of Bennett, but he begged for time to consider, and left immediately for the east on business.[163] It was not until January 21 that he finally announced his decision not to stand, citing business pressures.[164]

Bennett's announcement left the Calgary Conservatives at a loss for a candidate. Nevertheless, they moved quickly to hold a second convention on February 8. The second convention saw only two men nominated, Dr. Brett and Calgary lawyer M.S. McCarthy. Brett withdrew, and McCarthy, who had Bennett's support, was selected.[165] He had not been in the district long, but was one of the new breed of Conservatives represented by Bennett and Young. He had extensive political experience as an organizer and executive member of Conservative associations in southern Ontario, and was also the nephew of Dalton McCarthy. J.J. Young felt he had potential as a candidate by virtue of his fluency, tact and judgement, and Senator Lougheed had also set his stamp of approval on the young lawyer.[166] McCarthy was opposed by the Liberal G.A. Stewart who had beaten out another old-timer in politics, R.A. Wallace of High River.[167]

In the north, Conservative prospects were bleak. In Edmonton, Oliver's home seat, MLA Richard Secord was nominated in the fall of 1903,[168] while in Strathcona, O. Bush, a farmer turned real estate agent was selected to compete with the Liberal nominee, Peter Talbot, in January 1904.[169]

Surveying the whole district, Bennett felt the outlook was not good. Despite the fact that he felt Oliver was losing some of his former appeal, Secord, in his view, was "no speaker and has no proper opinion of organization." Strathcona, which had a large number of American immigrants, was also doubtful. Bennett felt either A.S. Rosenroll or A.C. Rutherford, both MLA's would run as Liberals. Whichever man received the nomination, his chances were good, but Bennett hoped by playing off metropolitan rivalries, some gain could be made for the Conservatives. Thus he suggested nominating a Wetaskawin candidate if the Liberals nominated one from Strathcona, and vice versa. Calgary, in his opinion, was safe for the party but Alberta was a problem. He predicted the Mormons would vote solidly Liberal, but if Herron could grab thirty percent of this vote, he would win. His opinion of the aid that could be expected from the Galt Company was very low primarily because of the conduct of Magrath who was "a most unsatisfactory man in political matters . . .," and who Bennett had earlier accused of sabotaging his 1900 campaign in the south.[170]

Bennett's views coincided with those of Territorial Conservative president Thomas Tweed. Writing to Hugh Graham, national organizer of the party in May 1904, Tweed complained about the lack of funds available to Conservative candidates, government influence and the manipulation of the foreign vote. In his opinion,

> If the election depended upon the English-speaking voter we should sweep the Northwest on autonomy alone; but what do Doukhobors, Galicians etc. know or care about the question.

He predicted those constituencies having a large foreign vote would return Liberals, and generally described the situation as "grave."[171]

In the constituency of Alberta, the election centred mainly upon autonomy and transportation with local corruption and Liberal patronage becoming side issues of some importance. The Gazette emphasized that autonomy would mean more money to the west because of the control over the public domain that would revert to the Territories. Borden's suggestion that the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway be constructed as a public enterprise and run by an independent commission was also lauded. Scheer stressed that the Conservatives should win if well organized, noting:

> The country disapproves of the policy and conduct of the present leaders of the Liberal party and is disgusted at their inconsistencies and at the corruption prevailing.[172]

There were abundant examples of such corruption in and around Macleod. Scheer cited the Freeman dismissal and the case of the letting of a coal contract to supply the Macleod Court House and Customs office to A.F. Grady, a local hardware dealer, and the secretary of the Macleod Liberal Association.[173]

Herron's campaign was extremely vigorous. His first move was to make an extended visit to the Mormon community in January 1904.[174] The Mormons had voted solidly for Oliver in 1900, and it was imperative that Herron gain their support. Following his defeat in 1900, even Bennett had belatedly acknowledged the importance of the Mormon vote. In fact, writing to Borden in May 1903, he had suggested W.S. Allen, head of the Church in Canada, and a Conservative himself as a candidate.[175]

The campaign did not really pick up until the fall of 1904 however. The election was slated for November 3, and Herron spent an exhaustive October holding twenty-three meetings in nineteen days, and covering the constituency fully. He received the welcome assistance of Haultain who travelled the constituency with him, criticizing Laurier's autonomy policy and the Grand Trunk deal while revealing several examples of Liberal patronage.[176]

Malcolm Mackenzie's schedule was fully as tiring as Herron's. Between October 15 and the end of the month, he held nineteen meetings.[177] A.L. Sifton was brought in to campaign with him, and both men spent a good deal of time defending the Grand Trunk arrangements that the Conservatives had made such a point of attacking. Mackenzie spoke little of autonomy beyond his statement that he favored the move if it benefitted the Territories financially.[178]

Throughout the election, Saunders maintained an attitude of the strictest independence. In October he had written that both Herron and Mackenzie represented "straight Liberal and Conservative principles," and would likely "place party interests before the interests of the west."[179] This position was consistent with the one he had taken in 1900, and clearly betrays the dissatisfaction he felt with partisan politics at the local level. Though neutral in the constituency itself, if anything he leant more towards the Liberals on a national scale. He disapproved of both Borden and Bennett's policies, and had criticized Borden's stance on protection more than once in the past.[180] Bennett also found disfavor in Saunders eyes. The Calgary lawyer had travelled to the Ontario riding of West Grey to campaign for the Conservative candidate. The election was to serve as a test case of Ontario opinion over the autonomy issue, but his statements in favor of two provinces were not well received by the News which reported: "Mr. Bennett's attitude on the autonomy policy is out of harmony with that of the west generally."[181]

Despite Scheer's strong support, Herron's extensive ranching connections and his widespread popularity, the Conservative candidate did not win a landslide victory over Mackenzie; in fact his majority was only 73. He won heavily in Lethbridge, Macleod and the ranching and mining communities, but was defeated decisively by Mackenzie in the Mormon community--bearing out his own fears and those of Bennett a year earlier.[182] Herron's slim victory given the support of Lethbridge, Macleod and the ranchers further points out the declining political influence of the ranching industry. In past elections this support would have been sufficient to guarantee a substantial victory, but given new immigration and new economic interests in the south, he managed to win only by the narrowest of margins.

An interesting sidelight of the election was the struggle for the American immigrant vote. Bennett had recognized the need to attract the support of this community in 1903, and at the Moose Jaw convention, one of the reasons for his advocacy of the party lines resolution was his acknowledgement of its importance. He reasoned that the non-partisan attitude in Territorial politics conflicted with the partyism which emerged during federal elections, something which left Americans

> unable to understand why Conservatives should be fighting one another in local elections while agreeing in Federal contests.[183]

The party lines resolution therefore was, at least in part, an attempt to clear up this confusion and establish a clear difference between Liberals and Conservatives in the minds of Americans.

In 1904, Saunders also predicted that the unknown factor in the campaign would be the way the new immigrants, particularly Americans would vote.[184] In October the same year, Scheer accused the Liberals of attempting to manipulate the American voters by misleading them into believing that, like United States elections, it was necessary to register one's political affiliations. Once within the embrace of the Liberal party, Scheer speculated that all sorts of political influence was being brought to bear upon Americans to vote for the government.[185]

Following McCarthy's nomination in February 1904, he immediately left for Olds, Didsbury and Airdrie in the north to do a little early campaigning.[186] As in the south, however, election fervor died down in the spring and did not really surface until late August. With voting day obviously slated for sometime in the fall, the Herald began to form the issues of the campaign early in the month. J.J. Young felt the election would centre around autonomy, transportation policy, the use and abuse of public lands and corruption. He was especially critical of Sifton's recent deals with land companies which, he argued, resulted in the alienation of high quality western lands at nominal prices.[187]

Young's predictions that transportation would play an important role in the campaign were further borne out by the visit of C.M. Hays, general manager of the Grand Trunk Pacific, in the first week in September. Hays promised the railway would build a branch line to Calgary as quickly as possible, prompting a burst of pro-Grand Trunk sentiment from the Herald.[188] A week later however, Young announced

Hays' visit had merely been an electioneering tactic of the Liberals, and the Grand Trunk had no immediate plans to build a branch line to Calgary.[189] McCarthy took advantage of this disillusionment to make government construction of the railway one of the major planks of his platform along with autonomy. He also stressed the benefits of protection. Local issues crept into the campaign in the form of the need for a bridge across the Bow just below the CPR's rail trestle.[190] McCarthy enjoyed substantial outside support during the contest, as both Senator Lougheed and Premier Haultain spoke for him, while Manitoba Premier Robert Roblin visited the city in mid-October.[191] Only Bennett, working for the party in Ontario and the more doubtful constituencies in the north was absent.

Unlike the 1900 election, the 1904 campaign was free from racial slurs and personal abuse. Dr. Stewart conducted a relatively low-key campaign, stressing the Liberals had not raised tariff barriers and supporting provincial autonomy only if it benefitted the district financially. His greatest strength was in rural areas, but this was not enough to defeat McCarthy who won 14 out of 17 polls in the city, but only 15 of 40 polls outside of Calgary. His majority over Dr. Stewart was 448.[192]

As in 1900, both men courted the labor vote assiduously. Labor strength in Calgary was over 1,500 by 1904, and a significant voting block.[193] The local president of the Trades and Labor Council seemed to waver between both candidates, but ultimately, it appears labor decided to support McCarthy whose support base was more urban than rural.[194] In his bid for union support he was certainly aided by the fact that two-time civic alderman, R.A. Brocklebank, who had been elected both times as a labor candidate, had Conservative affiliations.[195]

There was almost no reporting of the elections in the north where, despite a good deal of misplaced optimism on the part of local Conservatives, both Secord and Bush were fighting lopsided battles.[196] In Edmonton, Oliver, touting the government's role in the construction of the Grand Trunk Pacific, simply crushed Secord despite Roblin, Haultain and Bennett speaking on his behalf. Oliver's majority was over 2,000 votes. Much the same result was seen in Strathcona where Peter Talbot, the highly popular MLA, outpolled Bush by an equally large margin.[197]

The victories of Herron and McCarthy were a pleasant surprise in an election which otherwise saw the Liberals returned to power with an increased majority.[198] For two reasons, the 1904 election closed an era in the political history of the district. In 1904, with division, the south reaffirmed its allegiance to the Conservative party, a loyalty which, since 1896, had been submerged by internal disputes within the party and the increasing voting strength of the north. Furthermore, autonomy had been promised during the election, and was apparently forthcoming in the new year. Both these developments signalled the end of the Territorial era, but with provincial status imminent, the Conservative party in Alberta faced special problems. The most important of these was the issue of leadership.

Both Premier Haultain and R.B. Bennett were leaders of the district Conservative party in their own separate ways, and despite Bennett's tactical defeat of Haultain in 1903, the Premier was still far more widely known and generally more popular than the Calgary MLA. Popularity was not at issue in the leadership struggle however, the real question was whether Alberta Conservatives were to continue to favor non-partisan government at the provincial level as Haultain advocated, or opt for partyism across the board. Depending on which way they went, either Bennett or Haultain would inherit the leadership of the Alberta party. At the end of 1904, this question and several others about the shape of autonomy were as yet unresolved, and with their resolution lay the key to the political fortunes of Haultain and Bennett and the Alberta Conservative party.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Lethbridge News, 8 July 1896; Calgary Herald, 15 June 1897.

[2] David H. Breen, "The Cattle Compact: The Ranch Community in Southern Alberta," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Calgary, 1969), p. 37.

[3] David H. Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier 1875-1922," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), p. 183.

[4] Ibid., p. 232034.

[5] Calgary Herald, 15 June 1897.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Lethbridge News, 14 October 1896.

[8] Calgary Tribune, 20 June 1896. The Tribune supported Cochrane in the election, and previous to his defeat wrote, "if Alberta returns a member hostile to the interests of whatever government is returned at the polls . . . our prosperity may be retarded."

[9] Lethbridge News, 8 July 1896.

[10] Calgary Herald, 18 March 1897.

[11] Lethbridge News, 17 February 1897.

[12] PASS, Mitchell-Hobart Store Correspondence, File no. 35, Politics, P. McAra to Mitchell, 10 January 1898. McAra was the secretary of the Territorial Liberal-Conservative Association.

[13] Calgary Herald, 4 March 1897; Lethbridge News, 11 April 1897.

[14] Macleod Gazette, 5 March 1897.

[15] The reductions amounted to three cents per hundred pounds of grain or flour moving east, and a ten per cent reduction on rates of agricultural implements moving into the west. V.C. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 54n.

[16] Macleod Gazette, 11 June 1897.

[17] Ibid., 14 July 1897.

[18] Lethbridge News, 5 August 1896.

[19] Calgary Herald, 3 March 1897.

[20] Lethbridge News, 14 September 1898.

[21] A.A. den Otter, "Alexander Galt and the Northwest: A Study in Frontier Entrepreneurialism," (Unpublished Phd dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972), p. 289-292.

[22] R.C. Macleod, "The Mounted Police and Politics," in Men in Scarlet, ed., H.A. Dempsey, (Calgary: McClelland and Stewart West, 1974), p. 109.

[23] Ibid., p. 111.

[24] Macleod Gazette, 16 April 1897.

[25] Lethbridge News, 26 June 1898.

[26] Calgary Herald, 3 June 1897.

[27] Ibid., 16 September 1897.

[28] J.W. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times, (Toronto: Macmillan, 1931), p. 160.

[29] Calgary Herald, 10 February 1898. Agitation over the route was so intense that a series of public meetings were held in Calgary during March to press the government to undertake construction of the road. Ibid., 10 March 1898.

[30] Lethbridge News, 5 August 1896.

[31] Calgary Herald, 17 March 1898.

[32] Ibid., 6 January 1898.

[33] J.G. MacGregor, A History of Alberta, (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1972), p. 182. MacGregor writes of Calgary at this time that "newcomers vastly exceeded old timers of five years standing, [and] nearly everybody was less than forty years old . . . ."

[34] D.H. Breen, "The Ranching Frontier," p. 294.

[35] den Otter, op. cit., p. 306.

[36] Lethbridge News, 13 October 1898.

[37] Calgary Herald, 11 March 1897.

[38] Ibid., 28 June 1898; Macleod Gazette, 3 June 1898.

[39] Ibid., 28 June 1898.

[40] Ibid., 14 June 1897.

[41] *Ibid.*, 1 April 1897.

[42] *Lethbridge News*, 30 January 1897.

[43] *Macleod Gazette*, 3 June 1898.

[44] L.H. Thomas, *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories 1870-97*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), p. 260. The federal government would not grant the Territories a four-year subsidy as requested by Haultain, and so the Assembly was forced to fall back on the old policy of requesting annual grants.

[45] E. Watkins, *R.B. Bennett*, (Toronto: Kingswood House, 1963), p. 30.

[46] G.F.G. Stanley, "From New Brunswick to Calgary--R.B. Bennett in Retrospect," in *Frontier Calgary*, A.W. Rasporich and H. Klassen, eds., (Calgary: McClelland and Stewart West, 1975), p. 255. Stanley writes that almost immediately upon his arrival in the town, Bennett heckled Oliver who was speaking in Calgary.

[47] It is important to note that perhaps the prime motive for Bennett's being urged to run for the Territorial Assembly was his partisan attack against Oliver.

[48] *Calgary Herald*, 27 September 1898.

[49] *Ibid.*

[50] *Ibid.*, 10 November 1898.

[51] *Ibid.*, 17 November 1898.

[52] *Lethbridge News*, 17 November 1898.

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] *Calgary Herald*, 24 November 1898.

[55] PAC, Sir Charles Tupper Papers, Tupper to N.F. Davin, 24 January 1899.

[56] *Lethbridge News*, 19 February 1899.

[57] Tupper Papers, Tupper to N.F. Davin, 10 February 1899.

[58] *Lethbridge News*, 2 March 1899.

[59] *Calgary Herald*, 2 February 1899.

[60] *Lethbridge News*, 28 January 1899.

[61] *Calgary Herald*, 21 April 1899.

[62] Lethbridge News, 9 September 1899.

[63] Tupper Papers, E. Doughty to Tupper, 20 November 1899.

[64] Ibid., Tupper to N.F. Davin, 23 October 1899. Tupper had earlier asked Davin to arrange "two or three" meetings for him on his way to B.C

[65] Ibid., Tupper to Elliot Galt, 17 June 1900. Tupper had met with Magrath to induce him to run for the district, but noted it was "useless" to expect him to accept the nomination.

[66] Lethbridge News, 16 November 1899.

[67] Calgary Herald, 30 November 1899.

[68] Ibid., 22 February 1900, 8 March 1900, 15 March 1900.

[69] Ibid., 3 May 1900.

[70] Lethbridge News, 19 July 1900.

[71] Macleod Gazette, 7 September 1900.

[72] Calgary Herald, 26 July 1900.

[73] L.H. Thomas, "The Political and Private Life of F.W.G. Haultain," Saskatchewan History, vol. 23, Spring 1970, p. 56. Haultain became embroiled with the daughter of former Lieutenant-Governor C.H. Macintosh in the early years of the century. The lady was somewhat unstable, and her condition undoubtedly placed an additional strain on the already harried Haultain.

[74] Macleod Gazette, 28 April 1898.

[75] Ibid., 24 August 1900.

[76] Ibid., 7 September 1900.

[77] Calgary Herald, 26 July 1900.

[78] Macleod Gazette, 7 September 1900.

[79] D.H. Breen, "The Ranching Frontier," p. 199n. The use of the term "upper class" to describe the ranching elite refers only to the social structure of Alberta; that is, from the standpoint of either power, prestige or economic wealth, the ranching elite formed an upper class in the district. Such may not have been the case had the ranchers been transported into the social system of Ontario.

[80] Calgary Tribune, 26 September 1900.

[81] Calgary Herald, 27 September 1900.

[82] W.S. Waddell, "The Honorable Frank Oliver," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1950), p. 284-285.

[83] *Calgary Herald*, 4 October 1900.

[84] *Ibid*., 18 October 1900.

[85] *Macleod Gazette*, 12 October 1900.

[86] *Calgary Herald*, 4 October 1900.

[87] *Macleod Gazette*, 12 October 1900. Union organization had first come to Alberta in 1899 when the Western Federation of Miners had organized a district in the south. P. Philipps, "The National Policy and the Development of the Western Canadian Labor Movement," in *Prairie Perspectives II*, A.W. Rasporich and H. Klassen, eds., (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), p. 49.

[88] *Calgary Herald*, 24 October 1900; *Macleod Gazette*, 26 October 1900.

[89] *Calgary Herald*, 1 November 1900.

[90] *Macleod Gazette*, 26 October 1900. *Edmonton Sun* quoted in *Macleod* Gazette, 12 October 1900.

[91] *Calgary Herald*, 4 October 1900.

[92] Waddell, *op*. *cit*., p. 270-271.

[93] *Calgary Herald*, 8 November 1900.

[94] *Ibid*., 29 November 1900. The Mormon community voted solidly with the Liberals as it had in 1896. Although there were Conservatives among the Saints--C.O. Card and W.S. Allen being the most prominent--from 1896 on, no doubt influenced by the support and aid Clifford Sifton had given to the irrigation project, the Mormons supported the government.

[95] *Ibid*., 15 November 1900.

[96] *Ibid*.

[97] PAC, R.B. Bennett Papers, Bennett to E.W. Beatty [1911 (n.d.)]. Bennett wrote of Magrath's conduct in retrospect that, "ten years ago Magrath was actively supporting Clifford Sifton and opposing me as a Conservative candidate . . . ."

[98] *Macleod Gazette*, 16 November 1900.

[99] *Ibid*., 2 November 1900.

[100] *Lethbridge News*, 15 November 1900.

[101] *Ibid*., 1 November 1900.

[102] *Calgary Herald*, 22 November 1900.

[103] *Macleod Gazette*, 23 November 1900.

[104] R.L. Borden, *Memoirs*, vol. 2, ed. Henry Borden, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada Ltd., 1938), p. 28-29.

[105] *Macleod Gazette*, 24 May 1901.

[106] *Calgary Herald*, 7 February 1901.

[107] *Ibid.*, 14 February 1901.

[108] *Lethbridge News*, 23 November 1900.

[109] Tupper Papers, Tupper to Deane Freeman, 17 June 1899; Tupper to Haultain, 22 January 1900.

[110] Waddell, *op. cit.*, p. 309-310.

[111] Canada, Senate, *Debates*, 28 March 1902, p. 101.

[112] E.H. Oliver, *The Canadian Northwest: Its Early Legislative Records*, (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1915), p. 1159.

[113] C.C. Lingard, *Territorial Government in Canada: The Autonomy Struggle in the Old North-West Territories*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946), p. 40.

[114] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

[115] *Ibid.*

[116] *Lethbridge News*, 10 April 1902.

[117] *Macleod Gazette*, 10 January 1902.

[118] *Lethbridge News*, 15 May 1902.

[119] Lingard, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[120] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Borden, 30 March 1903. Following the Moose Jaw convention, Bennett indicated to Borden that he had been working four years to introduce party lines into the Assembly. Bennett had earlier complained to Borden that Haultain had been appointing Liberals to positions which should have been occupied by Conservatives, and on this basis called into question Haultain's loyalty to the Conservatives. (*Ibid.*, Bennett to Borden, 10 March 1903).

[121] Lingard, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[122] *Ibid.*, p. 58.

[123] *Calgary Herald*, 25 September 1902.

[124] *Lethbridge News*, 24 September 1902.

[125] Lingard, op. cit., p. 120-121.

[126] Stanley, op. cit., p. 264. Stanley writes of Bennett's partyism that: "He was a strong exponent of party politics and was determined to introduce political parties into the North West Territories."

[127] Lingard, op. cit., p. 117. Lingard notes: "Whatever opposition existed bore no relationship to party politics." In the light of evidence emerging from the Bennett papers, this does not appear to be true.

[128] Watkins, op. cit., p. 53. Watkins notes Bennett's early desire to become Prime Minister, and writes of his later career in western politics that: "If he was to succeed, his party must be active."

[129] Lingard, op. cit., p. 107.

[130] Bennett Papers, Bennett to A.L. Sherwood, 14 February 1903.

[131] Ibid., Bennett to Senator Perley, 15 February 1903.

[132] Ibid., Bennett to Senator Perley, 11 February 1903.

[133] Ibid., Bennett to A.C. Kemmis, 2 March 1903.

[134] Ibid., Bennett to Dr. H.C. Walker, 2 March 1903.

[135] Ibid., Bennett to Dr. Cowan, 10 March 1903.

[136] Ibid., Bennett to Borden, 10 March 1903.

[137] Ibid., Borden to Bennett, 19 March 1903.

[138] Calgary Herald, 1 March 1903. The Tribune had become the Albertan in April 1902.

[139] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Borden, 30 March 1903.

[140] Macleod Gazette, 3 April 1903.

[141] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Borden, 30 March 1903.

[142] Calgary Herald, 7 April 1903.

[143] Stanley, op. cit., p. 254.

[144] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Borden, 22 June 1903.

[145] D.H. Bocking, "Political Ambitions and Territorial Affairs 1900-1904," Saskatchewan History, vol. XVIII, no. 2 (Spring, 1965), p. 70.

[146] Ibid., p. 71.

[147] D.E. Smith, Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan 1905-1931, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 6.

[148] Canada, House of Commons, Debates, 30 March 1903, p. 710.

[149] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Thomas Tweed, 28 August 1903.

[150] Calgary Herald, 9 July 1903, 3 July 1903, 22 August 1903.

[151] Macleod Gazette, 2 April 1903.

[152] Ibid., 3 July 1903. Wood went on to become a district judge in Saskatchewan. He died in 1925. Thomas Clarke, "The Macleod Gazette," in The Story of the Press, (Battleford: Canadian Northwest Historical Publications, vol. 1, no. 4, part 1, 1928), p. 49.

[153] E. Hagell, "The Lethbridge News," in The Story of the Press, Battleford: Canadian Northwest Historical Publications, vol. 1, no. 4, part 1, 1928), p. 80. Saunders sold the paper in 1905 and built a ranch in Pincher Creek where he died in 1922.

[154] Dorothy Diller, "Early Economic Development in Alberta to 1905," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1923), p. 138.

[155] P.N. Sharp, The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada, (New York: Octagon Books, 1971), p. 9. Sharp writes: "The economic desirability of settlers from the United States as well as their farming experience, easy assimiliation and resourcefulness, led responsible authorities to make special efforts to interest them in Canadian homes." J.B. Hedges reports that by 1902, U.S. immigration amounted to 39% of the total inflow in the west. J.B. Hedges, Building the Canadian West: The Land and Colonization Policies of the CPR, (New York; Macmillan and Co., 1939), p. 166.

[156] Diller, op. cit., p. 138.

[157] F.A. Swyripa, "Ukrainian Canadian Historiography in the English Language: A Survey," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1976), p. 13. Swyripa points out that the term Galician or Ruthenian was erroneously used to cover most ethnic groups from eastern Europe.

[158] Macleod Gazette, 1 September 1903.

[159] UAR, A.G. Bundy, "In the Foothills of the Rockies," in Southern Alberta History and Tale, vol. 1, p. 44-45. Southern Alberta History and Tale is a part of the Alberta Folklore Collection which was gathered under the direction of Robert Gard from 1949 to 1951. The collection is an extensive, though ill-organized source of Alberta history housed in the Rare Book Room in the University of Alberta.

[160] Lethbridge News, 3 September 1903.

[161] Ibid., 7 January 1904.

[162] Macleod Gazette, 6 November 1903.

[163] Calgary Herald, 10 December 1903.

[164] Ibid., 21 January 1904. Bennett was caught up in negotiations with the federal government which eventually led to the CPR's being granted a huge "irrigation block" south and east of Calgary. (Bennett Papers, Bennett to E.W. Beatty, 24 April 1905.)

[165] Calgary Herald, 11 February 1904.

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid., 21 January 1904.

[168] Ibid., 19 November 1903.

[169] Ibid., 21 January 1904.

[170] Bennett Papers, Memo to J.S. Hall, (n.d.). Probably September 1903.

[171] PAC, R.L. Borden Papers, Thomas Tweed to Hugh Graham, 18 May 1902.

[172] Macleod Gazette, 26 February 1904.

[173] Ibid., 14 October 1904.

[174] Ibid., 29 January 1904.

[175] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Borden, 7 May 1903.

[176] Macleod Gazette, 22 October 1904.

[177] Lethbridge News, 13 October 1904.

[178] Ibid., 20 October 1904, 27 October 1904.

[179] Ibid., 6 October 1904.

[180] Ibid., 28 March 1901, 6 October 1904.

[181] Ibid., 1 June 1904. Bennett while in the east, attempted to make an issue of the schools question although there was little dispute over the matter in the west. Speaking to a reporter in October 1904, he noted the existence of separate schools was "the first question calling for decision" when provincial status was granted. (J. Castell Hopkins, The Canadian Annual Review: 1904, [Toronto: The Annual Review Publishing Co., 1905], p. 344.)

[182] Ibid., 4 November 1904.

[183] Bennett Papers, Bennett to Borden, 30 March 1903.

[184] *Lethbridge News*, 6 October 1904.

[185] *Macleod Gazette*, 7 October 1904. Recent scholarship has tended to centre upon more culturally distinct homgeneous groups. See for example, F.A. Swyripa, "Ukrainian Canadian Historiography in the English Language: A Survey," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1976) and H. Palmer, "Alberta Responses to Foreign Immigration, 1880-1920," (Unpublished MA dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971). While posing certain difficulties of research because of its wide dispersion, the American community in the west is perhaps deserving of more intensive study than it has received in the past.

[186] *Calgary Herald*, 18 February 1904.

[187] *Ibid*., 4 August 1904.

[188] *Ibid*., 7 September 1904.

[189] *Ibid*., 14 September 1904.

[190] *Ibid*., 13 October 1904.

[191] *Ibid*., 20 October 1904, 3 November 1904.

[192] *Ibid*., 10 November 1904.

[193] H.C. Klassen, "The Bonds of Brotherhood and Calgary Workingmen," in *Frontier Calgary*, H.C. Klassen and A.W. Rasporich, eds., (Calgary: McClelland and Stewart West, 1975), p. 269-270.

[194] *Calgary Herald*, 13 October 1904.

[195] *Ibid*., 2 April 1903. Brocklebank had been a delegate to the Moose Jaw Convention.

[196] GAI, J.F.C. Bown Papers, Bown to W.D. Northrup, 1 October 1903. Bown noted that organization was well in hand and there was a good chance of beating Oliver.

[197] Waddell, *op*. *cit*., p. 318-323.

[198] J.M. Beck, *Pendulum of Power*, (Scarborough: Prentice Hall of Canada, 1968), p. 106.

CHAPTER V

THE 1905 ELECTION

The answers to the questions posed by Alberta were not long in coming. Laurier had promised during the campaign that if returned to power he would introduce a measure to provide for autonomy.[1] In January, both Haultain and his Commissioner of Public Works, G.H.V. Bulyea went to Ottawa to plead the case of the west.[2]

In their discussions with the federal cabinet, both men urged that one province be created of the whole Territories. However, this position was at odds with the stance taken by Laurier and western MP's, both of whom desired to create two provinces.[3] Ultimately this view prevailed, and on February 21, when Laurier introduced his autonomy legislation to the House, there were two separate bills creating the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. In addition to setting out the number of new provinces, the legislation also reserved control of the public domain to the federal government, and maintained the separate schools system.

From a political point of view, the creation of two provinces rather than one was the result of careful calculation by the Liberals. If one province were created, Haultain would almost certainly have been named its first Premier. But this situation was only acceptable to western Liberals as long as the Assembly remained non-partisan, and Haultain's actions since 1903 had cast a good deal of doubt on the sincerity of his political independence. Thus the prominent Strathcona

Liberal, Peter Talbot, wrote to future Alberta premier A.C. Rutherford in March, that although Haultain apparently eschewed partyism at the Territorial level, he was nevertheless "in league with Conservatives here to embarrass the Government."[4] Because of this suspected clandestine political activity, Liberals opposed the establishment of one province, preferring to limit or perhaps eliminate Haultain's influence through the creation of two provinces.

This suspicion of partisanship was further responsible for Haultain's being passed over as Premier of either Alberta or Saskatchewan. Thus writing to Bulyea in July, Laurier said:

> The attitude of Haultain has made this [his selection as provincial premier] impossible in my judgement. When he [Haultain] threw himself into the contests of London and North Oxford and especially announced his intention of carrying on the provincial elections on the avowed policy of destroying the school system . . . he left us no alternative but to accept the declaration of war.[5]

In August, Bulyea was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta, and in early September, as expected, he swore in a Liberal government headed by A.C. Rutherford as the province's first administration.[6] An election was anticipated in the fall, and Liberal prospects of success were quite good. They were given a healthy boost by Haultain's decision in July to remain in Saskatchewan to lead a non-partisan party against the Liberal government headed by Walter Scott.[7] This left the leadership of the Conservative party in Alberta to R.B. Bennett, a development which made Alberta Liberals extremely happy. Peter Talbot had noted this prospect earlier, and had advised Rutherford: "If I am right . . . and Bennett leads the Tories in Alberta, you have a snap."[8]

Talbot was not far wrong. The Liberals had both the federal and new provincial governments from which to dispense patronage, and the added advantage of being able to call an election whenever they felt the time most propitious. Furthermore, they had gerrymandered Alberta's twenty-five provincial constituencies to give the Liberal north one more seat than the south.[9] In addition to these trump cards, to be dealt an ace in the form of Bennett was more than the Liberals could have hoped for. Bennett's track record in federal politics was unimpressive, and he had shown in the 1900 election that he was unable to generate substantial support outside of Calgary. In fact he was reluctant to lead the party at all, and was far more interested in his own business affairs and his ever-expanding legal practice.[10] Unfortunately for Alberta Conservatives, he was the only Tory of prominence in the province.

Bennett was elected leader at a provincial convention held in mid-August in Red Deer, but the fact that he would only agree to it on a temporary basis further underlines his lack of interest in provincial politics.[11] Writing to a friend in Victoria immediately after the convention, he glumly explained his decision to take the leadership of the party saying:

> It [Conservative chances of election] is a rather forlorn hope owing to the manner in which the constituencies have been divided but someone had to assume responsibility for a fight and much against my own judgement I find I have to do it.[12]

Soon after Bulyea had called him to form the government, Rutherford set the date of the election for November 9. The issues of the campaign were very clear cut. Conservatives opposed all aspects of the autonomy legislation, while Liberals supported the bill. The Conservatives conducted the more vigorous campaign of the two, vociferously condemning the government's withholding of public domain, pressing for the abolition of separate schools and proposing government ownership of all public utilities. The Liberals on the other hand campaigned on the merits of the autonomy bill and generally avoided expressing strong opinions on either public domain or the schools question. In fact, much of their campaign was centred on Bennett who was attacked as the symbol of the corporate dominance of the west. Liberal candidates trotted out his CPR affiliations, and further revealed that he served in a legal capacity for the Bell Telephone Company and the Calgary Water Power Company as well.[13] This tactic was much more effective than was Bennett's attempt to turn the schools question into a major election issue and, added to the obvious advantages the Liberals already enjoyed, virtually assured their victory. Bennett was defeated in West Calgary as were old-time Conservatives G.C. Ives in Lethbridge and Reverend Gaetz in Red Deer. In fact, of twenty-five constituencies, only two returned Conservatives.[14] It was a crushing defeat, and one from which the Conservative party did not fully recover for sixty-six years.

FOOTNOTES

[1] O.D. Skelton, The Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, vol. 11, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 224.

[2] C.C. Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada: The Autonomy Struggle in the Old North-West Territories, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946), p. 129.

[3] Ibid., p. 131.

[4] Cited in L.G. Thomas, The Liberal Party in Alberta: A History of Politics in the Province of Alberta, 1905-1921, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), p. 15.

[5] Cited in Skelton, op. cit., p. 243-44. The London and North Oxford "contests" were federal by-elections held in Ontario in the summer of 1905.

[6] L.G. Thomas, op. cit., p. 19.

[7] D.E. Smith, Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan 1905-31, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 12.

[8] Cited in L.G. Thomas, op. cit., p. 17.

[9] Ibid., p. 13. Thomas notes that in the 1904 election the south cast 1,000 more votes than the north.

[10] PAC, R.B. Bennett papers, Bennett to M.S. McCarthy, 24 February 1905.

[11] Lethbridge News, 18 August 1905.

[12] Bennett papers, Bennett to H.D. Helmken, 24 August 1905.

[13] L.G. Thomas, op. cit., p. 26.

[14] Ibid., p. 28. Conservatives were elected only in Rosebud and High River.

CONCLUSION

Commenting on Upper Canadian politics in the late 1830's, Anna Jameson wrote: "There reigns here a hateful, factious spirit in political matters . . . ."[1] Mrs. Jameson was describing a closed society, isolated by geography and tormented by economic stagnation. Political rivalries in this claustrophobic atmosphere tended to take on a particular intensity. Her description may be aptly applied to Alberta politics up to 1896. Admittedly, geographic separation was greater in the western case, but the similarities between the two far outweigh the differences. Metropolitan rivalries, regional contests and depressed economic conditions were typical of both communities.

Prior to 1896, unrest, dissatisfaction and internal rivalries were endemic to Alberta politics and consistently disrupted and disorganized the Conservative party in the district. The party was, from its inception, southern in character. Its elites were virtually all representatives of the ranching community. As well, Alberta Conservatives were linked to the CPR by virtue of their connection with the Macdonald administration, and because up until 1891 the Railway Company served the south exclusively.

Its metropolitan ranching and railway contacts and its regional identification with the south certainly limited its appeal in the north, which eventually became solidly Liberal, but from 1887 to 1896, because of the numerical superiority of the south, the Conservatives had no difficulty in winning both federal elections held during the period. In fact, it is reasonable to speculate that had regional and economic identification been the only factors limiting the appeal of the Conservative party to northern voters, the Tories would have continued to triumph in succeeding elections as well. Even up to its first provincial election in 1905 the south held a slight majority over the north in terms of population.

However, added to this regional identification, two other factors tended to limit Conservative chances of victory after 1896. The first was metropolitan rivalry. Consistently from 1887 to 1900, the Conservative party in the south was wrought by internal disputes between the Calgary Conservative Association and local associations in the south. These rivalries were usually caused by attempts by Calgary Conservatives to field their own candidate in federal elections, but were primarily the product of metropolitan struggles between Calgary and southern towns like Lethbridge and Macleod. The rejection of the candidacy of Richard Hardisty in 1887, T.B.H. Cochrane's defeat in 1896 and R.B. Bennett's loss in 1900 were all partly the result of these rivalries.

The second factor which proved politically detrimental to the Conservative party in Alberta was simply the need for federal aid in the development of the west. Up to 1896 the Conservative administration was in power, and bore the brunt of both the western demand for development policies and of the blame for the depression. The Conservative government was in large part judged from this pragmatic criterion, and its popularity rested largely on the amount of federal money it made available to the west. When in 1896 the federal party was racked by the Manitoba Schools Question and the difficulty of finding a leader to approach the stature of Macdonald, Alberta Conservatives refused to sympathise. They merely cried that these problems prevented the government from showing sufficient interest in the district. Albertans used the 1896 election as an opportunity to register their displeasure with the government's neglect, and elected Frank Oliver. Certainly the south remained Conservative up to 1904, but even in the ranching country the strength of the party was being eroded. While other factors can be cited to partially account for the decline in the fortunes of the Tories, the reciprocal relationship between voting for the government in power and securing government funds for development cannot be overlooked. From 1887 to 1896, the Conservatives used this relationship to their advantage, but unfortunately for the Conservative party, following the 1896 election prosperity and the Liberal party seemed to walk hand in hand. With the west coming in for a large share of this new found wealth, western voters demonstrated their approval of the Liberal government by consistently voting for government candidates. This pragmatic side to the western and Alberta voter thus worked for the Conservative party only as long as the west benefitted economically from a Tory government. After 1896, this same pragmatism tended to work against the Conservatives and for the Liberals.

With prosperity and immigration, the composition of the Alberta electorate also began to change, and this development even further hindered the Conservatives' chances of electoral success. Much of this new immigration went to the northern portion of the district; but perhaps more importantly, the new immigrants were not socially or economically linked to the Conservative party, and tended to associate the Liberals with the prosperity they saw around them in the west.[2]

This in turn prompted the Conservative party to seek new leadership and issues to appeal to the new voters. In this attempt they were severely restricted by their elitist nature. The Conservative party in Alberta was above all a ranching party of southerners, who represented the upper class of both Ontario and Britain. Most of the immigration after 1896 was composed of settlers whose social and economic backgrounds in no way approximated those of the Conservatives. Thus the appeal the Tories could have to these Americans and Europeans was limited at best. Even when they attempted to cultivate the immigrant vote, it was primarily to the Americans that they appealed, and this group was widely dispersed throughout the district, weakening its influence in any one particular constituency. The Alberta Conservative party thus remained the party of the elite and did not seem able to readjust its appeal on a wider, more popular base.

The Liberals had no such problems, and gleefully manipulated the European vote while cultivating both Roman Catholics and Mormons. In its popular appeal the Liberals could proudly display Frank Oliver who was manifestly a man of the people. He stood out in stark contrast to the upper class snobbism of Cochrane or the more staid but no less upper class aura of R.B. Bennett, the corporate lawyer. The failure of both these men dictated that the Conservatives return to more popular candidates, and the 1904 election proved the appeal of such men. John Herron, for example, was an old-timer in the country, and a well-liked rancher. However he seemed to be a throwback to the days of D.W. Davis. The mere fact that Herron's election victory in the southern constituency of Alberta was slim only underlined the failing political influence of the Conservative-rancher elite.

Also emerging after 1896 to further complicate the difficulties the Alberta party faced was Premier Haultain. Haultain was easily the most popular Conservative in the west. Yet by 1905 his political career was in swift decline. In many ways he had been the author of his own misfortune, however, for his non-partisan stance in the Territorial Assembly and his staunch Conservatism in federal elections made him an enigmatic figure to both Conservatives and Liberals alike, and by 1903 he had painted himself into a political corner. Led by men like Bennett and T.A. Patrick of the Conservatives, and Liberals such as G.H.V. Bulyea and A.L. Sifton, partisanship had been steadily moving into the Assembly. By 1903, sufficient partisan pressure had been generated to cause the Territorial edifice of non-partisan politics to crumble. Haultain, through his conduct in 1903 at the Moose Jaw convention, and because of his active campaign for the Conservatives in the 1904 election and subsequent by-elections in Ontario in 1905, was left standing forlornly in the ruins of the house he had created, by-passed by those Territorial Conservatives who had opted for party lines in the west on the one hand, yet condemned for abandoning non-partisan politics by the Liberals on the other. Haultain's integrity may have been intact by 1905, but his lack of political acumen had left the western Conservative party without effective leaders and in a shambles.

This was certainly true of Alberta where Haultain was the key to the political fortunes of the Conservative party in provincial politics. With him at its head in 1905, the party might well have won the provincial election, even given the Laurier government's creation of a Liberal provincial administration. Unfortunately, he had lost the opportunity to do this in 1903 when he refused to sanction party politics in Territorial elections. His decision to remain in Saskatchewan to lead a non-partisan party meant that the leadership of the Alberta Conservative party fell by default to R.B. Bennett, whose political appeal was somewhat limited. Haultain's actions in 1903 and his decision to lead a non-partisan party in Saskatchewan spelled the death of the Conservative party in Alberta, and Bennett was unlucky enough to have to preside at its funeral.

FOOTNOTES

[1] A.B. Jameson, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, vol. 1, (Toronto: Coles Publishing Company, 1972), p. 99.

[2] T. Flanagen also develops this theme in his article, "Political Geography and the United Farmers of Alberta," in The Twenties in Western Canada, edited by S.M. Trofimenkoff, (Ottawa: History Division - National Museum of Man, 1972), p. 141.

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ABBREVIATIONS

UAR, University of Alberta Rare Book Room

GAI, Glenbow Alberta Institute

PAC, Public Archives of Canada

PASS, Public Archives of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon

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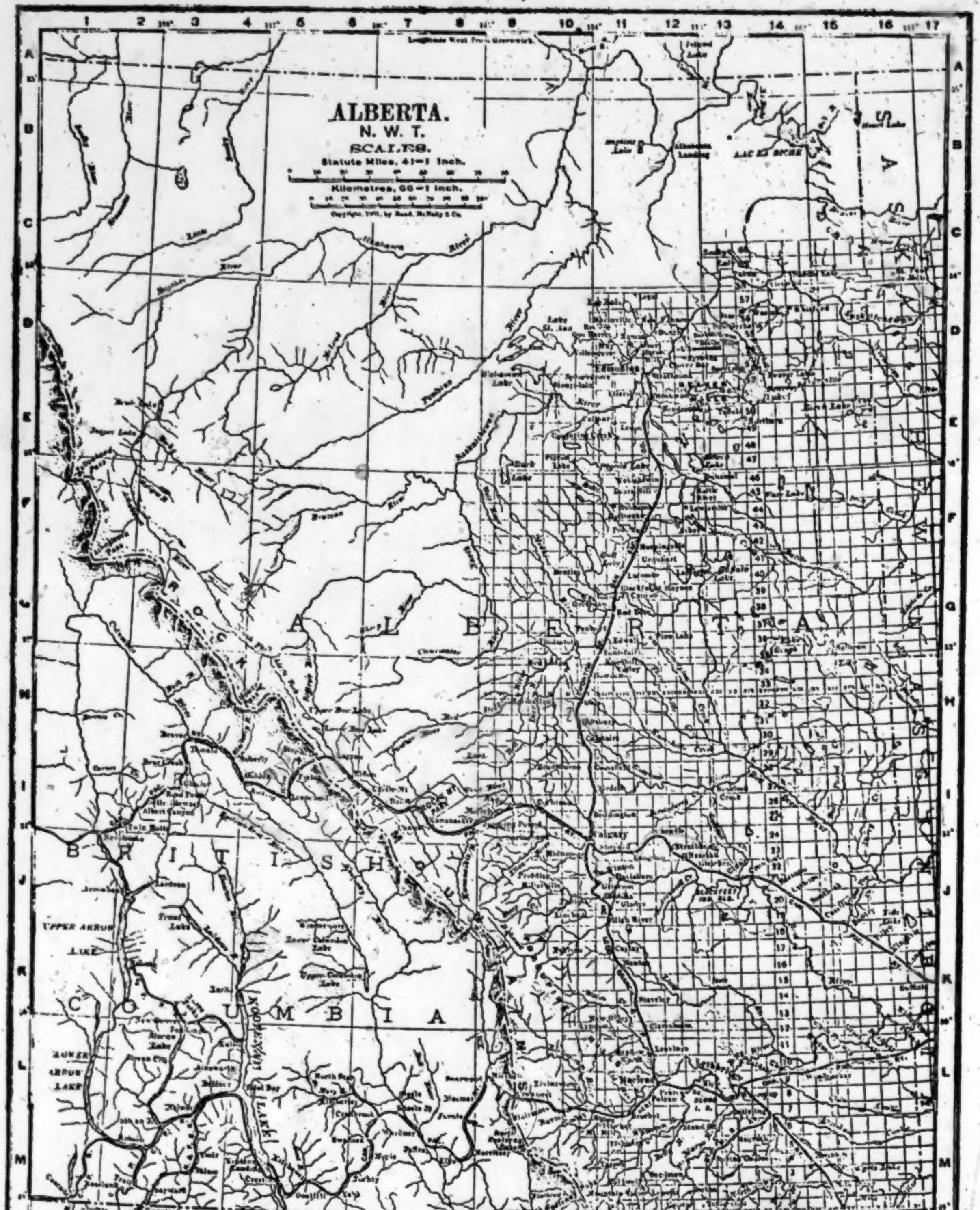
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